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# The Review of Metaphysics

PHILOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY

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# The Review of Metaphysics

A PHILOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY

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# The Review of Metaphysics

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## ARTICLES

### THE NEW EMPIRICISM AND HUMAN TIME

JOHN WILD

WE are all aware of the negativistic trends of thought which, during the first half of our present century, have been actively attacking ontology and metaphysics, the central philosophic disciplines.<sup>1</sup> In India this attack has failed. Immediately following the Revolution, the so-called mechanists in the Soviet Union used Western positivist arguments in attacking Hegelian and Marxist ontology as unscientific, non-empirical, and even meaningless. But these arguments were clearly analyzed and refuted even before 1930 by Deborin and others. There are pervasive data to which the restricted methods of the different sciences have no access. It is only by the careful study of these data that knowledge may be coherently ordered and brought to bear on moral and social issues in a sound and disciplined way. Hence positivism was rejected, and philosophy is now taught in Soviet high schools, universities, and engineering schools, and is actively pursued, though under strict ideological limitations, by trained minds.

In the Western world, this negativistic movement has proved to be a far more serious and lasting threat. Failing to take a firm root in Europe, the place of its origin, it moved to England and North America, where the central disciplines of philosophy were found to be less firmly grounded in sound empirical traditions of academic life and thought. Here for many years it has now run its course, and has exerted a powerful destructive effect. In many secular schools and universities, the history of philosophy has been neglected, logic and linguistics have replaced ontology as the focal discipline, and many philosophers, moved by the widespread fear and idolatry of "science," have abandoned the

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<sup>1</sup> This paper was presented as the Presidential Address, Metaphysical Society of America, on March 20, 1954.

performance of their vital descriptive and synoptic functions. This has had a markedly disintegrating effect on the cultural life of the West at a time of crisis and world upheaval.

But this is, fortunately, not the whole story. Certain thinkers refused to be swept along in the destructive currents and stood firm, especially those, like A. N. Whitehead, who were more intimately acquainted with the restricted sciences and their necessary limitations. Metaphysics, while seriously weakened academically, did not completely die away. One unambiguous indication was the formation of this society five years ago. In the last two years we have more than doubled our membership. Many of us here present are seriously engaged with basic ontological problems from very divergent points of view. Nor are we all. A glance at the journals will show that there are others similarly engaged.

Many of our colleagues who have been deeply influenced by positivistic analysis are now convinced of the futility of any serious attempt to construct an artificial language or logic to correct the supposed inaccuracies, delusions, and ambiguities of ordinary speech. They are now aware that such linguistic structures are required for an accurate reference to ranges of data and empirically founded shades of meaning to which science is oblivious. It is true that ordinary language is not the end of philosophy. But it is the beginning. Hence this new respect for common speech is a step in the right direction. Philosophy in America is now alive once more.

In Europe it is very much alive. In fact it was saved from that positivism and scientism which followed the collapse of idealism in England and America in the early years of this century, and never went into decline. What saved it? If we study the history of European thought, we shall discover that this saving movement was initiated by the attack on British empiricism launched by Brentano and Husserl at the turn of the century. This soon took the form of a new empiricism, known as phenomenology, which gave firm support to philosophy after the decline of idealism, and has underlain its extraordinary development ever since.

When the empirical reaction against ungrounded speculation

blazed forth in England and America, however, there was no such support. Here the older empiricism of Locke, Berkeley, and especially Hume still held undisputed sway. Never having been subjected to any critical purification and expansion, it brought to the modern Anglo-Saxon world a very oversimplified and restricted view of the immediate data of experience. Existence was not distinguished from essence. Time was reduced to a mere succession of atomic impressions. Other philosophic data were simply ignored. With such a restricted view of the evidence it was inevitable that ontology should be attacked as mere word jugglery, and metaphysics as airy speculation incapable of empirical check. Where there are no data there can be no discipline. This certainly is true. Without a more accurate and comprehensive view of immediate experience, metaphysics must wither and languish. Complex theories may be formulated. But if none can be checked, one will be as good as another.

This truth is clearly exemplified in the disciplined metaphysics of contemporary Europe. These penetrating studies, representing very divergent schools of thought, have developed in the closest interdependence with phenomenology. Heidegger and Sartre refer to their works as exercises in phenomenological ontology. The metaphysical studies of Hartmann, the Louvain school, and the whole existentialist movement would not even have been possible had it not been for that painstaking phenomenological research which has now definitively shown that the so-called "empiricist" view of human world experience is basically truncated and distorted. This research has revealed vast ranges of qualitative and existential data which lie altogether beyond the range of quantitative scientific method. Until we also gain a sure and reliable access to this evidence by the application of disciplined phenomenological description, the status of metaphysics in the English-speaking world must still remain uncertain.

On the continent of Europe epistemological subjectivism is dead. Phenomenalism has given way to phenomenology. Thinkers of all schools are convinced that there are certain facts, like existence and awareness, which pervade the special data of the different sciences, and are simply taken for granted by them. Our ultimate aim as metaphysicians is to account for these data.

But before we can hope to do this adequately, we must describe and analyze them as they are given. This task is by no means easy. It is arduous and filled with risk. Yet it is both necessary and prior, for it is only by referring to accurate descriptions of this obscure but ubiquitous evidence that opposed theories may be checked and judged. We must learn to dwell on these immediate data as they are found, to look before we explicate, to describe before we theorize.

One such philosophic datum is time, which has recently become the object of serious metaphysical consideration and debate in this country.<sup>2</sup> It pervades the whole of human experience, internal as well as external. Our own feelings and thoughts, as well as the physical changes of our bodies and things outside us, are flowing events in time. Like other philosophic data, though very familiar to us, time has turned out to be most recalcitrant to careful description and analysis, hard to grasp in its manifold modes and phases, and even harder to explain. As Augustine has poignantly remarked of his own philosophical experience:

Is there anything that we speak of in a more familiar or more knowing way than time? And of course in a sense we do understand when we speak of it, and when we hear it referred to by another. But what then is time? If no one ask of me, I know; if I wish to explain to him who asks, I know not.<sup>3</sup>

Science simply takes it for granted. It has worked out certain techniques for measuring one kind of time, and has discovered certain limitations of these techniques. But the task of telling us what time is, and of distinguishing its major kinds, lies beyond its restricted horizons and capacities. In the history of western philosophy, many scattered insights have been attained. Among these, the remarks of Augustine on human time in the XIth Book of the *Confessions* must be given high rank. They have been further developed and clarified by the work of living phenomenologists in Western Europe, especially by Heidegger.

<sup>2</sup> See Paul Weiss, "The Past: its Nature and Reality," this journal, V (1952), pp. 299-306; J. E. Smith, "Existence, the Past, and God," this journal, VI (1952), pp. 287-95; N. Rotenstreich, "The Impact of the Past," this journal, VI (1953), pp. 597-603; and Weiss, "The Past: Some Recent Discussions," this journal, VII (1953), pp. 299-306.

<sup>3</sup> *Confessions*, Book XI, ch. 17.

In this paper, I shall not have time to summarize all these results. I shall select certain ones which bear on the relation of time to dimensions of space, and on the contrast between world time and human time. These results point to a general theory of time (or times) quite distinct from that of Heidegger or Hartmann, which I shall briefly sketch. Philosophic data need to be pondered and dwelt upon to be understood. We have no time for this. But wherever possible I shall try at least to indicate the evidence on which this theory rests.

Bergson called our attention to the deepseated tendency of post-Cartesian thought to confuse temporal duration with spatial extension. More recently the existentialist philosophers of contemporary Europe have shed further light on the close connection between time and existence. They have associated the reductive attitude towards time with a similar disregard for existence, which they have named *essentialism*. The tensed acts of existing are reduced to tenseless structure. Recent relativity theory has encouraged certain philosophers to revive this essentialist trend of thought, and to think of time as a static "dimension" or "ordered manifold,"<sup>4</sup> and to find tenseless ways of translating the temporal expressions of ordinary language.<sup>5</sup>

Painstaking phenomenological studies, such as those of Nicolai Hartmann,<sup>6</sup> however, have found no evidence to support this tendency. They fall far short of any verification of the Bergsonian philosophy as a whole. But they point very clearly to a sharp distinction between world time and any spatial dimension. Four differences are especially important.

Space as such is fixed. A point or a line does not flow out of existence. It is permanent and stable. But an instant no sooner comes into being than it passes away, not into another position but into non-existence, to be replaced by another. Memory and anticipation give us cognitive access to the past and the future. Hence we may *imagine* a stretch of time as a world line. But

<sup>4</sup> Cf. D. C. Williams, "The Myth of Passage," *Journal of Philosophy*, XLVIII (1951), pp. 457-72.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. W. V. Quine, "Mr. Strawson on Logical Theory," *Mind*, N. S. LXII (1953), pp. 441-42.

<sup>6</sup> See Nicolai Hartmann, *Philosophie der Natur* (Berlin, 1950), esp. pp. 136-251.

closer analysis will show that this analogy with a spatial line breaks down, for all the parts of a line are coexistent. The parts of a duration, on the other hand, cannot coexist. They are necessarily successive. This temporal separation, or inability to be *together*, radically distinguishes a duration from a line.

In the second place, there is nothing in a single spatial dimension which corresponds to the present, past, and future, the so-called modes of time. All the points on a given dimension exist together. Hence the selection of a single point is arbitrary. It may be here or there. But the instants of time do not coexist in this way, and the selection is not arbitrary. In fact, no selection of an instant in real time can ever be made, for I am restricted to the now that is given me *now* in the order of time. This order is inalterable. We compare the past and the future with two segments of a line, running in opposite directions from an arbitrary point. But this is inaccurate, for while there is a difference in order, there is no *existential* difference in the two segments. They both coexist in the same way, with the central point. But this is not true of the modes of time. If they exist at all, the past and the future certainly do not exist in the same way as the present. The past is fixed and unalterable. The future is indeterminate. Only the present is fully actual. No modal differences of this sort are to be found in any dimension of space.

It might be thought that the three modes, or ecstasies of time, as Heidegger calls them, can be compared to the three dimensions of Euclidean space. But when we think more carefully, we shall see that this is also impossible because of a third and striking difference. The flow of time is irreversible, and in one direction only. It will not flow backwards, nor in a perpendicular direction. We can imagine time as a line. Then it is easy to conceive of changes in angular direction. But such conceptions find no support in the given data. The flow is in one direction only, towards the future. There is nothing corresponding to angles or to angular quantity.

A fourth essential difference has been sharply focused by Hartmann,<sup>7</sup> and is of great contemporary interest. This is the uniformity of temporal flux. Bodies *in space* can move in differ-

<sup>7</sup> See Hartmann, *ibid.*, pp. 176-82.

ent directions at different velocities. Space is indifferent to these diverse determinations. But such is not the case with time, which, as Plato saw in the *Parmenides*,<sup>\*</sup> determines every being in time to flow with it in a single direction at a constant rate. One thing, of course, may move faster than another. What this means, however, is that the first covers a greater spatial *distance* in the same period of time. The difference is in the *spatial dimension*.

If one being could flow faster in time than another, this would mean that it might be possible for me to catch up with my older brother, two years older than myself. But this is quite impossible. I may catch up to him spatially, intellectually, physically, and even pass beyond him in every other dimension. But with time this is impossible. It carries everything in its own flux of before and after at the very same rate. This is presupposed in every comparison of velocities, for velocity is a relation between a variable spatial interval and a constant time. The interval may vary, but not the time.

One runner in a race may arrive at the spatial end point sooner than another at 2 : 05. But he cannot reach the instant 2 : 05 sooner than the other. If this were possible, *sooner than* would lose all meaning, for there would be no constant measure. Velocities could not be compared. It would be impossible, for example, to hold that the velocity of light was constant in different regions of the universe. Everything in the world of nature seems to be engulfed in an irreversible flux of time which cannot be quickened or retarded, but flows everywhere at a constant rate.

Certain modes of experience, such as conceptual thought, are not included within the dimension of space. But time is not so restricted. As Kant pointed out, it embraces every phase of experience, whether outer or inner. Physical changes of every kind, processes of growth, feelings, thoughts, and choices—all are engulfed in the flux of time. No one of these is free to change its tempo or to alter its position in the order of before and after. The image of the stream is inappropriate for two reasons. In the first place, every part of the stream, from beginning to end, is coexistent with the rest. This is not true of the past, present, and future modes of time. In the second place, there are fixed

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<sup>\*</sup> Plato, *Parmenides* 154A-C.

banks by which the water of the stream flows. But there are no fixed banks outside of time by which it flows. Every stable entity known to us lies *in* the stream of time. Hence it is by this means that we grasp the whole of nature as a unity. What we mean by the world are all those entities of whatever kind that are included within the flux of time.

How about the objects of false propositions and fictitious entities? They have no existence of their own, but only as the termini of intentional acts. They exist in so far as someone thinks about them. And these acts are entitatively datable and included in the flux of time.

We have noted the most essential respects in which time differs from a spatial dimension. But with this in mind, it is proper to refer to world time as a dimension. We cannot think of it as a substance, for it is the necessary condition for the existence of any changing thing. Neither can we think of it as an accident without embarking on unverifiable and ungrounded speculations. What kind of a timeless substrate could there be, of which time itself would be an accident? We know of no such substances. It would seem better to think of it as a structural condition of the natural world, which any entity must meet. This does not require us to think of it as preexistent.

Without world time, there would be no changing entities. But it is also true that without entities, there would be no time. In this respect, it would seem to be like unity and other transcendental structures, which are neither substances nor accidents, but necessarily condition all natural existence. The all-embracing dimension of time is an ontic condition of this sort. So far, we have been regarding it in abstraction, to distinguish it from space, though of course it never occurs alone, but always as an aspect of some ongoing process. Let us now examine world time in this more concrete context. What traits do we find to be characteristic of the actual processes in world time? Four, I think, are peculiarly important.

The first is the predominance of the *now* over the other modes of time. The various parts of a temporal process are never actual at once. If so, it would be a timeless cluster of essences, and cease to be a process. All that is ever actual is a momentary now.

It is true that this is something more than an indivisible limit, or the change would not be continuous. A certain minimal unit of past change is also included, that now *has become*. A tendential future is also now beginning. These auras of transition surround the actual now. They stamp it with that order of before and after which we find in the original data of experience, and mark it as a process. But beyond this tiny knot of transition the past is no longer, and the future as yet non-existent. After a brief interval, this now will have passed into oblivion, except for certain traces which it has conveyed to the next.

We speak of the scarred and worm-eaten relic in the museum as an object of the past. But we shall look in vain for this pastness in the relic here before us. The scars and stains are just as present as its other properties, and require no different type of analysis. We may infer this past, and bring it before our minds. But physically it is no longer. It is physically finished, absent, gone. The same is true of the remote future. We may predict it and imagine it, but physically it is not yet. World processes exist only at a transitory now. The past is a now-no-longer. The future is a now-not-yet. The process as a whole is a succession of actual nows, with a potential matrix of change between.

The second trait concerns the order of this now succession. A now is the realization of active tendencies in the past, a result which comes out of them. It is also the beginning of further tendencies out of which the future is emerging. This genetic priority of potency to act establishes a certain order in the physical processes of world time. The potential precedes the actual, the changing to the having changed. In this respect, the image of world-time as a vast stream coming down from the past, moving through the present, and into the future is correct. Hence we are led to think of the three modes of time as necessarily succeeding each other, first the past, then the present dividing the other two, and finally and last the future. As we have seen, this is not quite correct, as the present is not merely a dividing limit. It is also a pulse of transition which penetrates into the change that has just become, and the future that is tending to be. But with this qualification, the past is prior, the future later. The irreversible direction of physical change is from potency towards

act. Hence the past comes first, the present next, and after the present the future.

In the third place, we must now note that no process is ever identical with its past or future. It can never repeat itself. This does not mean, however, that it lacks unity, like the so-called dense series of instants, any two of which must either coincide, or be separated with a chasm between. Such a mathematical analysis as that of Lord Russell<sup>9</sup> not only destroys the unity of process, but the process itself as well, which it reduces to a fixed set of static immobilities.<sup>10</sup> The so-called pulsational theory of James and others is certainly preferable. But it is open to the objection that by including a bit of the past and a bit of the future within the specious present, it confuses the modes of time.

An answer is suggested by the classical concept of change as the actualization of a potential which is realized only at the term. In this way, as we have suggested, the least unit of change may not be a fully actual expanse of time, but a potential matrix, realized only at a limiting instant which is also the inception of further change. A continuous process is then not made up of indivisible limits, but rather of change pulsations which are potentially divisible, but not divided. It is one in the sense that change is occurring without a break. But during every intermediate interval, something new is realized. No repetition is possible.

This emergence of novelties which pass away in being ceaselessly replaced by further novelties, seems to agree with the evolutionary facts now presented to us by the disciplines of astronomy, geology, biology, anthropology, and even human history. There is nothing more firmly engrained in nature, more omnipresent and more ancient than the emergence of the new.

In the fourth place, we must notice a peculiar absence of wholeness which necessarily belongs to any moving process. By *whole* we mean *all the parts*. But the parts of a temporal change

<sup>9</sup> See Russell, *Our Knowledge of the External World* (London, 1914).

<sup>10</sup> For a sound summary of the literature and a penetrating critique of Russell, see J. DeBoer, "A Critique of Continuity, Infinity, and Allied Concepts in the Natural Philosophy of Bergson and Russell," in *The Return to Reason* (Chicago, 1953), pp. 92 ff.

are not merely divided. They are *existentially* divided. When B exists, the preceding and succeeding parts A and C do not exist. All the parts, i.e. the whole, can never exist at once. When the process reaches its end, let us say at the limit of C, it is finished, and no part at all exists. Hence it is never a whole, but at every stage either incomplete or totally nonexistent.

It is true that we grasp the process as one, and speak of it as enduring. But all we mean by this is a continuity of change. As long as the next phase fits fairly closely with what went before, the process is one. But there is never an absolute identity. Something novel always emerges. It is true that certain capacities and tendencies are sustained, and passed from one now to the next. But these are unfinished and potential. What is actual is always different.

The real parts never coexist. But they pass continuously from one to the other. This is the closest approximation to integrity that a process may achieve. It is never whole in the sense that all parts are present together at a single moment, or that any actual part ever remains the same. Such existential integrity is necessarily beyond the reach of any process in world time.

We may summarize our results in the following way. The events of physical nature are engulfed in a dimension of world time which conditions and orders their existence in a ceaseless flow of before and after, which is sharply distinct from the non-flowing dimensions of space. This flow seems to be irreversible, and proceeds everywhere in a uniform direction at a constant rate. Even if this is rejected, the following traits would probably be accepted by any analysis in close touch with the given data. A process or event in world time is a now-succession. Beyond the present pulsation of change, the past is no longer, and the future is non-existent. These processes unfold according to a genetic order in which the present comes after the past, and the future after the present.

Imperfect potencies may be sustained but no two actual stages in any world process are ever the same. Novelties are being endlessly poured forth and disappearing into the past, to be replaced by further novelties. Every process in this time is divided against itself, the presence of one part precluding the existence of the rest.

Genuine integrity in the sense of all parts existing together is out of the question. We have had to be brief in sketching this picture. But such would seem to be the nature of that world time which is presupposed by disciplined investigations of various areas of reality, including the history of man. The time dimension *in which* process occurs is of this sort.

There is no question that many phases of human reality, when regarded abstractly, as scientific method demands, can be fitted neatly into this picture. The processes of human physiology are certainly events in world time. The birth of an individual, his organic growth, and what is commonly called his death are events in world time. This is even true of his entitative acts of cognition and choice, which come and go, and have their dates. His life as a whole, when regarded as a mere complex of such factors, is a process in time, with beginning, middle, and end, which then falls into a fixed position in the past. Is this all there is to human time? Can the whole of human existence, without remainder, be fitted into the flux of world time? With respect to these crucial questions there is a significant division of opinion.

All events hitherto studied by science are processes in a world time. Hence an affirmative answer would seem to be required by the basic postulates of science. Many philosophers in the Anglo-Saxon countries, deeply impressed by the past successes of this method, would unhesitatingly answer in the affirmative. The human person is enormously complex. No doubt many novel and distinctive features are found in his make-up. Not much is yet known. The human sciences are only in their infancy. But whatever these processes turn out to be, they will certainly turn out to be events of some sort in world time, succeeding one another in the genetic or causal order from the past into the present and the future. As in other cases, laws of regular temporal sequence may be discovered, predictions may be made, and used for purposes of direction and control.

On the continent of Europe, however, almost no qualified philosopher would now give such an answer. This is because of the striking results of certain phenomenological investigations into the nature of human time, inaugurated by Heidegger in his

influential and epoch-making book *Sein und Zeit*,<sup>11</sup> and continued by other phenomenologists, including Jean-Paul Sartre<sup>12</sup> and Maurice Merleau-Ponty.<sup>13</sup> These investigations have been strangely neglected in this country, and are almost wholly unknown in the world of Anglo-Saxon philosophy. It will not be possible to give a full account of Heidegger's theory of time, nor of other phases of his philosophy which are far more questionable. I am not primarily concerned with theoretical interpretation, but rather with those phenomenological facts which bear on the basic contrast between world time and human temporality.

In the first place, it is simply a basic empirical mistake to think of personal existence as restricted to a present pulsation of change. This is to ignore the noetic or intentional structure which stretches it out, at any human waking moment, into the future and into the past, as well as into surrounding objects. The human person is not a thing first confined to a now, and *then* stretched into a past and a future. From the very beginning, his being is stretched out into possibilities ahead of himself, and then an objective past which he must take over, if he is to care for things in a present moment. Hence Heidegger calls these modes the stretchings or ecstasies of time.<sup>14</sup> The human person is not *in* this time. But rather he *is* it, and *exists* it. To have time for something is to care for it with self-devotion. To lose time, or to waste it, is to waste the self.

I am not confined to a present instant nor to a specious present. I am the future I have projected ahead of myself. I am similarly stretched out over the past I have (intentionally) and have been. In this intentional sense, the past is real. I am also concerned with things in the present that I know. These ecstasies are interdependent and inseparable, but each exists in its own peculiar way, and cannot be reduced to the others. The future is in the mode of possibility. No part of it can become actually present without altering its mode of existing. The past is already there; its factual content fixed, and not open to choice. The

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<sup>11</sup> *Sein und Zeit* (Halle, 1927), sections 65-81.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. *L'Être et le néant* (Paris, 1946), pp. 180-215.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. *Phénoménologie de la perception* (Paris, 1945), pp. 469-95.

<sup>14</sup> Heidegger, *op. cit.*, pp. 328-31.

present is open to choice. These ecstasies exist all together or not at all. To think of a human future, for example, without a past and present, is absurd. The ecstasies fit into an integrated union. But each has peculiar characters of its own. One cannot be reduced to another.

It is, therefore, a profound error to think of human existence merely as a process *in* world time whose being is restricted to a present now, and whose past and future are totally absent. Man is not a mere thing-object, or process, occurring *in* world time. To think this is to fall into an ontological confusion. Man exists and temporalizes himself in a different way. As long as I am, I am the unfinished possibilities projected ahead of me, and the unfinished past I have been. In their own peculiar way, the future and past are also essential phases of the ecstatic being of man. To ignore this, and to think of one's self as a mere world process, is not only to fall into theoretical error, but into moral lethargy as well. It is to run away from one's own existence, to fly from that decisive choice to which the feeling of dread arouses us. But such action is full of risk and danger. It is more comforting to let ourselves drift with the current, and then to gape at the finished results.

This brings us to the second point of contrast. The phases of world time follow a certain genetic order, as we have noted. In this genetic order, the past content comes first, the present next, and the future last. Hence we image this flux as a stream. Is this true of human time? In the case of an authentic human act where the agent knows what he is doing, this is certainly not true. The person has projected the end ahead of himself. He knows what this end requires. It is in the light of this that he takes over his past and engages himself in action. The future comes first, before the past and the present.<sup>15</sup>

This was certainly clear to the classical analysts of human purpose. Their insights have now been confirmed by masses of phenomenological evidence which have been carefully analyzed, and whose implications have been shown to affect the basic structure of human existence far more deeply than was formerly

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<sup>15</sup> Cf. Heidegger, *ibid.*, p. 329.

supposed. The human person is not a fixed substance with accidental purposes added on. His substance is tendential, his most essential tendencies are intentional, and his very existence is ecstatic. He is the possibilities that he projects ahead of himself, always more than what he now is. It is in the light of this ecstatic future that he directs his human action. In contrast to the temporal order of physical events, which flow from the past into the future, human existence temporalizes itself out of the future into the past. In human time, the future is unmistakably prior. The temporal order of world time is reversed.

Suppose my life were ended at this very instant, and I were judged solely in terms of the various divergent acts I had managed to actualize, with no attention to my projected future. Would justice be done? Is this all I am?

The implications of this question will lead us to the third critical difference between world time and human time, which concerns the factor of identity. We have observed the radical absence of this factor in the processes of world time. These processes never repeat themselves. They pour forth a ceaseless wealth of novelty in which no two moments are ever the same. This is true even of the entitative acts of a human agent. They are always different to some degree. They emerge from diverse genetic backgrounds, and possess divergent qualities and tones. If the human future is disregarded, we must admit that here too repetition is impossible. But the future cannot be disregarded. It is an essential guiding phase of every human act. Though the act by which I strive for it may be different, nevertheless the possibility for which I strive may be the same. Thus through a medley of conflicting and divergent situations, by opposite and dissimilar acts, a man may still preserve a basic identity of purpose. This purpose may never be realized. It may be wholly invisible and opaque to one observing the different acts from the outside. But this invisible future may be the heart and core, the very identity of the man.

This existential insight has a very direct relevance to human history.<sup>16</sup> There are those who say that the task of the historian

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<sup>16</sup> Cf. Heidegger, *ibid.*, pp. 385-86.

is exhausted in establishing the record of events that really happened, and tracing their genetic origins; in this way, history becomes merely a subordinate phase of world time. But this is to forget that the past had a future, which was its very heart and core. It is to forget the risk and choice and contingency that belong to all the human acts of man. The overt acts of the past no longer exist. But its real possibilities are still before us, and may be still repeated. The *human* past is not now over and finished, because it was never all there. The most essential task of the historian is to reveal these real possibilities of the past to us. By learning of these, and trying to repeat them, I may express an authentic freedom, and stand firm against those streams of ceaseless novelty that wash everything else away. Human history is always collapsing into a mere flux of novelties. But it *can* repeat itself.

Human history can not only be repeated. It can also attain an integrity that is closed to all processes in world time. The entitative acts of a human life make up such a process, all the parts of which can in no sense exist together. The existence of one precludes that of others, which are separated in world time. But the being of man is not exhaustively reducible to this process. It is also spread out in the ecstasies of human time which do exist all together at once, and must so exist. At this very moment, a human person is the future ahead of himself, and the past that he has been. He knows that he is about to die. The dread elicited by this thought may lead him to seek an escape, and to lose himself in the flow of events. In this way, he may reduce himself to a process which is lived in piecemeal bits. But another alternative is always open.

Projecting his real possibilities up to the very end, he may be led to choose them with a final commitment. Then taking over his finite past with all its guilt and corruption, he may engage the whole of himself in final action up to death. At the instant of death his life will be over. But final action committed, not to one year or to ten, but up to the very end, is possible here and now. This is what we mean by that human wholeness or integrity, which is out of the question for any process in world time.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Heidegger, *ibid.*, pp. 332, 410.

These and other insights of the existentialists into the ontology of man have enabled them to infuse new life into the discipline of ethics, and to rescue it from those morasses of meta-ethics and semantics into which it has elsewhere fallen. I have only been able to sketch out a few conclusions concerning the nature of human time without going through the painstaking phenomenological analyses on which they are based. But I hope I may have succeeded in suggesting some of the basic reasons which make it impossible, without flouting the evidence, to think of human existence as reducible to a series of events in world time.

The scientific analysts of man who assume this *a priori*, without carefully examining the facts, are not only making a basic mistake. It is not that the various traits and properties they discover are not there. They may be all there. These analysts are making a far more basic mistake, the most basic mistake that can be made, the confusion of one mode of existing with another. This mode of existence pervades every property of an entity and affects it *as a whole*. The human person does not exist in the way that they think.

I shall conclude by referring briefly to one critical point where I believe that Heidegger is insufficiently clear, and another where I believe he is definitely mistaken. He speaks of the being of man as ecstatic. This is correct. But what kind of being is this, and how is it to be analyzed? Here his answers are not always clear. In refining them further, we must say that all three ecstasies are noetic or intentional in character. Through sensory and rational cognition, what is physically present may be brought before the mind, and made noetically present. This is the present ecstasy of time. But, as is well known, imagination and reason together are not restricted to what is physically present. They can also hold what is physically absent before the mind, as when I think of flying horses which do not exist at all, or the sun at night when it is not exercising its physical presence before my senses. It is by these faculties that I am able to hold the absent past in memory, after it is physically gone. Sensation plays only a small role in the actual perception of physical objects in which I am really interested. Here the partial perspectives of sense are being constantly completed and clarified by imagination and reason,

which constantly bring hidden and absent phases before the mind. Even when physically present, we are already grasping them by the clearer powers of imagination and reason. In a sense, we are already "remembering" them. Hence the well-known psychological fact that it is easier to remember objects in which we have been, and still are, interested.

It is important to realize that it is the thing itself which I remember, not some image or copy. As the object recedes into the past beyond the range of sense, it first fades into a dim confusion, before the higher faculties come into play. But when it is once more focused by imagination, and especially by reason, the temporal distance makes little difference, and it can be firmly held. Of course, owing to cognitive weakness, many mistakes are made. Owing to the limitations of interest, many gaps remain. History is the disciplined attempt to correct these mistakes, and to fill the most important of these gaps in human memory, an essential phase of our own existence, the past that we have been.

The anticipation of the future places an even greater strain on the higher cognitive powers, for here it is not merely a question of holding something already presented before, with the aid of sense, but, on the basis of observed regularities, to bring something before the mind which has never been presented at all.

This amazing capacity to achieve cognitive union with objects widely separated both in space and in time is bound to call forth scepticism, since the physical things with which we are most familiar cannot act in this way. Thus some critics hold that the direct object of memory is an image inside the mind. But this conflicts with the facts. It is my dead friend himself whom I remember. Others, including many existentialists, hold that the object of knowledge is an abstract essence from which all the real life and existence has been squeezed.<sup>18</sup> The experiences of self-recollection and self-projection provide us with striking evidence against this view.

When I recall objectively my inner feelings and acts in a tense situation of yesterday, it is my subjective being itself that I recall. This being no longer has entitative existence. Hence it must

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<sup>18</sup> Cf. Kierkegaard, *Journals* No. 1042; Jaspers, *Philosophie*, Vol. I, pp. 13-19; and Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, pp. 157-58.

be the *object* of an intentional act. But there is no sharp break between this object held before the mind, and my lived existence here and now. I can fill in the gaps between by memory, and the one merges continuously into the other. Here subjective existence is held before the mind as an object, without any vital truncation or loss. It is the subject himself who has become objectified.

When, as a result of deliberation, I choose to realize a course of action projected into the future, the opposite occurs. Here it is an intentional object, my future self, that becomes subjectified. And here too the transition from intentional presence to entitative presence can occur without any radical break. Of course, mistakes may be made, and even in the most favorable circumstances, I am apt to meet with many unexpected incidents. But unless my whole project is altogether out of line with reality, I do not discover any radical discontinuity between the actual project, present as future object before the mind, and its final entitative presence within me. If such discontinuities were inescapable I could never find myself in any project. All moral deliberation and self-projection would be in vain.

This shows that not only structure and essence but existence itself, whether present or absent, can also be held before the mind. Physically man is restricted to a momentary present, with a brief tendential background and foreground. But cognitively he may wander without restriction through all the ranges of time. It is as an intentional object that he projects himself into the future, and noetically holds the past that he has been. This cognitive mobility in human time is responsible for the most distinctively human features of our experience. It is because of this, that our being is rightly termed *ecstatic*.

The greatest defect in Heidegger's analysis is his tendency to neglect the omnipresent flow of world time, and even at certain points to interpret it as a mere unauthentic mode of human time.<sup>19</sup> This is merely to fall into an opposite error, as remote from the evidence as that which attempts to regard man as a mere complex of events in world time. As a matter of fact, his own analysis presupposes that human existence is partially composed of such events. What is this past that we need to hold, if not the past

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Heidegger, *ibid*, pp. 408-11.

of a world time which is now over and gone? If this past is denied, our present stretching out to hold it is not an ecstasy at all, but a mere construction, and we are trapped in a subjectivism which neatly explains everything to us but the pastness of the past. Future existence can be made noetically present before the mind. But it is not entitatively present. Hence Heidegger constantly speaks of it as ahead of us—not yet physically existent in the irreversible flow of world time. Without this constant flux, the phrase “ahead of ourselves” would have no meaning. Human time is quite distinct, but it is founded on world time.

As a matter of fact, if we study the evidence of experience, we shall find ourselves constrained to accept *both* modes of time. Neither can be reduced to the other. Both are necessary. What we have referred to as the all-engulfing flow of world time does not engulf the cognitive powers of man. But it does engulf all other phases of his being, including his entitative cognitive acts which have their fixed dates. This inexorable flow of time preceded man and will succeed him. The individual comes into being and passes away in this flow. As long as he exists, it carries him on with all the other events of nature.

He can do nothing to change any dates once they are fixed, nor to quicken or retard its rate. He may travel faster or slower in space, but he cannot arrive at a given date any faster than a turtle or a snail. He is swept along at the same even rate by the universal flood of time that completely engulfs all the other beings of nature. This is the misery of man.

But he is not completely engulfed. The cognitive powers which are an essential phase of his existence enable him to achieve an intentional union with other objects from which he is physically distinct. Even more, they enable him to gain some knowledge of world time itself, its absent as well as its present phases. This access to the past and future sharply distinguishes him from any set of events in time, no matter how complex they may be. This makes it possible for him to anticipate the results of regular sequences in nature, and to control these sequences in accordance with his needs. More important than this, unlike the processes of nature, he is not divided from his own past and future. He can hold all the parts of himself together all at once, thus attaining

an integrity of thought and action which is closed to any type of process or event. Both in his individual and in his social life, he is able to devote himself to identical plans and purposes amidst the welter of new forms and facts that time is ceaselessly bringing forth. This ability to repeat himself and to stand firm in the all-destroying flux of novelty is a distinguishing mark of human history. No other natural history ever repeats itself in this way. The ecstatic being of this mysterious creature cannot be fitted into the engulfing flux. In the full integrity of his existence, he is more than a process in time. This is the grandeur of man.

Results of this general sort have often been suspected and defended by dialectic methods before. The new empiricism has broken them down into their component elements, has sharply focused many of them, and found them to be confirmed by a painstaking and disciplined examination of relevant philosophic evidence.

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## THE FOUR DIMENSIONS OF REALITY<sup>1</sup>

PAUL WEISS

It was one of the main objects of *Reality* to present a systematic account of the irreducible features of knowledge and of nature. The whole tried to make evident that each being was incomplete, the other of all the rest, and that it existed in time because it was inescapably concerned with making itself complete by mastering them. As I look back at that work through the haze of years, it seems to me to be over-compressed, and to despatch too many difficult issues with gnomic phrases and summary remarks. I think I often had no more to say on a given point than what I had finally caught within a sentence or two. But it is also true that I tried to progress from point to point without assuming anything more than I was forced to assume by the brute facts of the world and the demands of dialectic. I would be falsely modest were I not to say that I go back to that book again and again for inspiration and insight. The more distant it becomes the more impressed I am with what it does and says. The whole work tends to acknowledge nothing but what it unavoidably must. It tries to work with, not a minimum vocabulary or a minimum number of things, but with a minimum number of presuppositions. This is particularly true in the account it gives of what things need and use in order to complete themselves. It maintains that each thing points essentially to all the others; these are its final causes, what the things need and seek.

This doctrine is sound, I think, but not entirely adequate. If each thing is concerned with all the rest, no two things could have exactly the same object of concern. There will then be no reason why any two of them, contemporaries at any one moment, should be contemporaries at the next. Each will face a future distinct from that of any other, into which it will go in its own way and at its own pace. It was rightly remarked in *Reality* that the

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<sup>1</sup> From the Introduction to the Hebrew translation of *Reality*, by Yehuda Landaw, published in Jerusalem, Israel, 1954.

different futures share a number of features, making it possible to deal with individuals as members of various classes. But since no individuals act in terms of those features, and since those features exert no controlling power, those features cannot keep contemporary beings in temporal accord.

Contemporary beings enter the next moment as distinct beings in tandem. Their distinct objectives must be specifications of a common objective which they coordinately and independently realize in every act. One of the primary motives of my next book, *Nature and Man*, was to make evident the nature of and need for that single common objective. Its acknowledgment made it possible to bring into sharp focus the fact that causation, action—all becoming and change indeed—was at once limited and free, predictable in general but not predictable in detail. *Nature and Man* made even more evident than was the case in *Reality* that man was not only an integral part of the world but also a possible product of an evolutionary advance. It tried to show that man was distinct in kind from all others, possessed of a persistent self—and this without contradicting the fact that he was a natural being, governed by the same universal categories and laws which govern every other type of thing.

Man alone in nature has self-identity. He alone is capable of self-discipline and self-criticism, for he alone has a self. This stands out over against his body and the rest of the world because it alone is occupied with the fulfillment of the single all-inclusive objective. In the next book, *Man's Freedom*, an effort was made to show how the self strove to realize that objective—identified in that work with the Good. Preference, choice and will were there distinguished and related as agencies by which a man freely perfects himself and others by adopting the good as that which he should realize everywhere. *Man's Freedom* affirms that it was man's glory and task to work on behalf of that all-inclusive good. But it also saw that because man was inescapably impotent and ignorant he inevitably fails to do all he ought, and therefore is necessarily a guilty being.

*Man's Freedom* ends with the paradox that a man ought to but cannot do all the needed good, and nothing but good, to every being whatsoever. He necessarily fails to do what he ought to

do. This paradox cannot be mitigated by restricting the range of man's obligations, for not only will this restriction reduce his dignity, but no area of responsibility is so small as to be capable of complete mastery by any man. No one ever does or will do all that ought to be done even to only one other being. Nor can we hope that man's knowledge, energy, self-sacrifice or power will ever increase so much as to assure his doing all he ought.

The need to overcome the paradox has made me see my current and earlier speculations as fitting into a much wider, four-dimensional whole. In *Reality* and in subsequent writings reference was made again and again to the four-fold nature and activity of things. But not until I grappled directly with the paradox of ethics at the same time that I tried to meet the penetrating criticisms of such men as Nathan Rotenstreich did I become aware of the need to deal with basic issues from the four perspectives of actuality, ideality, God and existence.

Actualities are finite beings in space and time striving to complete themselves. In the guise of men they succeed to some extent in embodying in themselves and imposing on others the absolute good which is the concern of the self. The paradox of ethics is overcome with the recognition that a man does all he ought when he accepts as his own whatever is done by the totality of actualities. On this view there is no pre-determined constant good; the good, because it is a possibility for whatever there be in fact, must change in nature when and as the totality of things does.

The good, nevertheless, has a nature of its own, with power enough to attract a man and make him dedicate himself to its fulfillment. The paradox from this perspective is overcome when it is recognized that every actuality can be idealized, made to function solely as a locus of some universal, and, in the last resort, of the absolute good itself. A man fulfills his obligation to the good when he succeeds in making himself and others into representatives of it. He ought to live not as an isolated or private individual but as a part of a single idealized actual whole. The good will then be seen to demand not specific activities by men but an opportunity to achieve habitation in this world of ours. It

will be seen to make no reference to individuals; the individual for it is only a fragment of an actual, idealized whole.

The approach from the perspective of actualities and the approach from the perspective of the ideal are correlatives. Together they encompass most of what is contained in my previous writings—but not all. They make no provision for God—previously discussed in the essay, "God and the World"—nor for Existence—briefly touched upon in the studies "Being, Essence and Existence" and in "The Nature of the Past." Yet God and Existence are also essential, inescapable dimensions of the universe, offering their own solutions to the paradox of ethics, and illuminating what was left dark by the joint use of the categories of actuality and ideality.

Actualities and ideals change. The actualities must be preserved, the ideals need support, and the series of changes must be brought together to constitute a single interconnected set of epochs in time. God is that being who preserves actualities, supports ideals and makes a unity of what otherwise would be a disconnected set of occurrences. An approach from the perspective of God will enable us to solve our ethical paradox, since the good is realized without reserve by and in him: he who would do all he ought should submit himself and his acts for supplementation by God. This solution enables us to see that what the good demands of man, despite its being beyond the capacity of any individual to fulfill, is somewhat less than the good in fact requires. God not only supplements actualities but realizes the total good, and contains within Himself the meaning of existence.

Existence, however, has its own integrity, its own power. It is ingredient in every actuality, a restless force overflowing the borders of each, connecting it with all the others; it also comes to a focus in the good at which all actualities should be directed. The paradox from this view is resolved with the recognition that men are able to fulfill their obligations just so far as they accept the surging onrush of the world as containing within it all that is of value. On this view actualities and ideals are subject to a single cosmic flux, itself identical in reach and nature with the living, immanent God. It is a view which has no need to refer to any constant; for it, the constant is simply the material which

existence has constantly available. It should be supplemented with accounts where actualities, ideals and God are recognized to have independent natures and functions, for without them there would be no private individuals, no compelling futures and no unified values.

God and existence are correlatives. Together they encompass half the cosmos, the remainder being caught within the confines of the correlatives, actuality and ideality. All four are essential. Each offers a different but necessary solution to the original paradox; each grounds different disciplines; each deserves separate examination. The basic principles making possible an intelligible, systematic account of them all, and thus of ourselves who are at once individuals and idealized beings, touched by divinity and caught in a perpetual flux, are, I trust, extractable from the material now being translated.

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## SCHELLING'S CONCEPTION OF POSITIVE PHILOSOPHY

EMIL L. FACKENHEIM

### PREFACE

WHEN Schelling died a hundred years ago (August 20, 1854), his contemporaries' opinion of him might be summarized as follows. A precocious thinker, Schelling made a great contribution to philosophy around the year 1800, when he was still in his twenties. But he lacked system and thoroughness, and his contribution was soon assimilated and superseded by the system of Hegel. Moreover, he lacked stability. While Hegel spent his whole life working out his system, Schelling changed his standpoint so often as to drive his interpreters to despair. Finally, at least from 1804 on (when Schelling was not yet thirty) these changes were for the worse, for he moved more and more toward mysticism and obscurantism.

This appraisal became conventional opinion, and has remained conventional opinion until this day. In practically any history of philosophy which bothers with Schelling at all one can find this threefold condemnation of his work: that it consists of a number of more or less disconnected systems; that none of these is properly worked out; and that from 1804 on, they get worse and worse. As a result of this opinion, few historians have been interested in Schelling. When in 1944 air raids destroyed the Munich University Library, among the treasures destroyed were thousands of Schelling manuscript pages, mostly written in his later years. It seems that in nearly one hundred years nobody was sufficiently interested in these manuscripts to do anything with them.

But during the last few decades interest in Schelling has revived, at least in Germany and France. This new interest reflects the beginnings of a revision of judgment; indeed, a drastic revision. This is illustrated by the fact that this new interest centers on Schelling's last phase, the phase hitherto most neglect-

ed. It is a pity that this revival came too late to make possible the publication of more than a fraction of the manuscripts, before their destruction.<sup>1</sup>

As a result of the new investigations, it has already become clear that the conventional opinion of Schelling is grossly unjust. That opinion is based on the judgment of the contemporaries or near-contemporaries. And these were subject to prejudices which made an adequate understanding of Schelling difficult, if not impossible. Schelling's critics were theologians, positivists and Hegelians. If they were theologians, they looked to Schelling for an apologetic which they did not get, nor were meant to get. If they were positivists, they had even less sympathy with Schelling than they had with Hegel. And if they were Hegelians (as most of them were), they saw the most important criterion of judgment in systematic completeness, the very point in which Schelling was weakest; further, they were bound to regard his development after 1804 as an aberration or an outright betrayal.

To be sure, the conventional opinion is not entirely mistaken. Schelling does lack system and thoroughness; and his consequent tendency to mix the ill-considered, or even the absurd, with the profound confounds the present student as it did the past. But Hegelian prejudices have led to an exaggeration of this vice. Schelling may be weak in execution, but he is strong indeed in programmatic statement. Moreover, the latter strength accounts at least in part for the former weakness. Schelling was able to penetrate with extraordinary swiftness to first principles and ultimate implications. No sooner had he conceived a system than he perceived implications which made it problematic. While others would plod along, working out the details of a system Schelling had outlined, he himself already found it necessary to go beyond it. Thus time and again he faced philosophical crises. If Schelling never worked out any of his systems, this is in part because his systematic tendency was forever at war with his aporematic. But theologians, positivists and Hegelians had this in common: if they were prepared to admit philosophical crises at all, they regarded them as resolved, once and for all.

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<sup>1</sup> See Manfred Schröter's edition of the 1811 and 1813 versions of the *Weltalter* (Munich, 1946).

Because of their blindness to the aporematic element in Schelling's thought, the critics arrived at the opinion that his various systems were more or less disconnected. But this is in fact far from the case. The new system tends to spring from the problems created by the old. Indeed, it is doubtful whether there is any discontinuity in Schelling's development at all.<sup>2</sup> The modern student who fails to perceive a connection does well to suspect that the fault lies, not with Schelling, but with himself.

Because of their prejudices, the critics have been particularly unjust to the philosophy of Schelling's old age. Schelling here made the most radical shift of his entire career. He repudiated absolute idealism, and turned to what can only be called a post-idealistic metaphysics. Absolute idealism now became a mere "negative philosophy," i.e., a mere preface (though a necessary preface) to metaphysics proper, or a "positive philosophy," which did not as yet exist. But Schelling's critics were either hostile to all metaphysics, or else hostile to all but Hegelian metaphysics. Hence they were unable or unwilling to take the program of the positive philosophy seriously. As a result of their prejudices, Schelling's four volume *Philosophie der Mythologie und Offenbarung* is still little known, and less understood.<sup>3</sup>

But the climate of philosophical opinion has changed, and in

<sup>2</sup> For an attempt to understand one aspect of Schelling's thought as a continuous development, see E. L. Fackenheim, "Schelling's Philosophy of Religion," *University of Toronto Quarterly*, XXII, pp. 1-17.

<sup>3</sup> We must stress, however, that the Schelling-revival has already produced a number of substantial studies. See e.g.: Paul Tillich, *Mystik und Schuldbewusstsein in Schellings philosophischer Entwicklung* (Gütersloh, 1912); G. J. Dekker, *Die Rückwendung zum Mythos: Schellings letzte Wandlung* (Munich and Berlin, 1930); H. Schelsky, "Schellings Philosophie des Willens und der Existenz," *Christliche Metaphysik und das Schicksal des modernen Bewusstseins* (Leipzig, 1937), pp. 47-108. The most substantial work on Schelling's last phase is H. Fuhrmans, *Schelling's letzte Philosophie. Die negative und positive Philosophie im Einsatz des Spätidealismus* (Berlin, 1945). For Schelling bibliographies available in English see *Schelling: On Human Freedom*, tr. with introduction and notes by J. Gutmann (Chicago, 1936), and *The Ages of the World*, tr. with introduction and notes by F. de Wolfe Bolman (New York, 1942). These two works belong to earlier phases in Schelling's development, but they contribute to making the last intelligible. Of the *Philosophie der Mythologie und Offenbarung*, no part has as yet been translated into English.

such a way as to explain the new interest in the philosophy of Schelling's old age. At least one school of contemporary thought can approach that philosophy with sympathy, if not enthusiasm. This is existentialism. Existentialist thought, whatever else it is, is post-idealist, not simply non-idealist or anti-idealist. One might almost say that existentialism is misunderstood to the degree to which this fact is ignored. It is no accident that existentialists tend to see the decisive event for modern metaphysics in the collapse of Hegelianism in the middle of the nineteenth century;<sup>4</sup> and it is a most suggestive fact that practically every existentialist seems to have to struggle with Hegel.<sup>5</sup> This would appear to indicate an agreement that one can neither return to a pre-idealist metaphysics, nor remain with idealism. But this is precisely the conviction which gives rise to Schelling's positive philosophy.

This serves to explain, not only why contemporary philosophers do, but also why they should, take Schelling seriously. Schelling is not only the first in a long line of post-idealistic metaphysicians, but he also possesses unique qualifications. For having himself been the founder of absolute idealism, he is the critic who can be trusted most to have understood what he is criticizing. This fact alone should make us suspect that the *Philosophie der Mythologie und Offenbarung* is of first-rate importance not only for historical scholarship but also for contemporary philosophy; or at least for such consciously post-idealistic philosophies as existentialism. On the centenary of Schelling's death, it is fitting to draw attention to this work, which has been ignored for so long, but does not deserve to be forgotten.

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<sup>4</sup> For an excellent account of this collapse, see K. Löwith, *Von Hegel bis Nietzsche* (Zurich-New York, 1941).

<sup>5</sup> In the case of Kierkegaard, this fact is too well known to require documentation. Heidegger appears to have struggled with Hegel early in his career (see Löwith, op. cit., p. 159), and he has more recently written on him (see "Hegels Begriff der Erfahrung," *Holzwege*, Frankfurt a/M, 1950, pp. 105-92). F. Rosenzweig's *Stern der Erlösung* (Frankfurt a/M, 1921) is a running fight against Hegel, and it was written after his *Hegel und der Staat* (Munich and Berlin, 1920). Tillich's thought is clearly related to his early Schelling-studies (see, in addition to his above-quoted work, *Die religionsgeschichtliche Konstruktion in Schellings positiver Philosophie* . . . , Breslau, 1910), and thus indirectly to Hegel. It would be easy to give further examples.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In 1841 the aged Schelling emerged from decades of semi-retirement and literary silence. He came to Berlin, the stronghold of Hegelianism, in order to present his "positive" philosophy.<sup>6</sup> Everybody knew beforehand that this was a theistic metaphysics of freedom and existence, and thus not only an attack on Hegel but also a repudiation of Schelling's own former system, the system of identity. In his first lecture, however, Schelling defined the sense in which he repudiated idealistic dialectic: it was an indispensable part of philosophy, but only a part. The basic error of absolute idealism consisted in making the dialectic absolute.<sup>7</sup>

Schelling's lectures were not a success. The reaction of the Hegelians was epitomized by Eduard Gans, who remarked that the Hegelian system could be refuted only by a better system.<sup>8</sup> Perhaps the system had left something unabsorbed; but to recognize the unabsorbed as such was to begin to absorb it. The Hegelians failed to appreciate that Schelling's criticism of the system was radical. He pointed to freedom and existence as facts which no possible dialectical system could absorb; the step from rational system to existence was a *metabasis eis allo genos*.

No less significant is the reaction of that great enemy of the Hegelian system, Kierkegaard. He had come to Berlin especially in order to hear Schelling. At first he showed enthusiastic approval.<sup>9</sup> But his enthusiasm soon waned. "Schelling drives

<sup>6</sup> According to Schelling's own testimony, the "positive philosophy" was completed as early as 1831; see II 4.231. All quotations refer to the complete edition of Schelling's works, published under the editorship of Schelling's son (Stuttgart and Augsburg, 1856-61).

<sup>7</sup> II 4.366.

<sup>8</sup> Gans' comment was made as early as 1833, and based on hearsay, cf. Hegel, *Werke* (ed. Gans *et al.*, 2nd ed., Berlin, 1845 ff.), vol. VIII, pp. xii-xiv. Schelling took Gans' remark very seriously, and regarded it as typical enough to comment on it in his inaugural lecture (II 4.364).

<sup>9</sup> He wrote as follows: "I am so pleased to have heard Schelling's second lecture—indescribably. I have sighed for long enough and my thoughts have sighed within me; when he mentioned the word 'reality' in connection with the relation of philosophy to reality the fruit of my thought leapt for joy within me as in Elizabeth. I remember almost every word he said from that moment on. Here perhaps is the dawning of

quite intolerably," he wrote. "His whole doctrine of potency betrays the greatest impotence."<sup>10</sup>

These two reactions illustrate the problem discussed in this paper. Hegel confronted his age with a choice: an all-inclusive dialectical system, or the salvation of the particular brought about by the surrender of all system. The system was everything or nothing. Schelling's positive philosophy is an attempt to escape this dilemma. It by no means surrenders the notion of dialectical system, but seeks to combine a dialectic of essence and necessity with an undialectical doctrine of existence and freedom. Because of the latter, it displeased the Hegelians; because of the former, it displeased such opponents of the system as Kierkegaard. In their displeasure, neither party subjected Schelling's conception to the impartial examination which it deserved.

## 2. THE NATURE AND LIMITS OF THE "NEGATIVE" PHILOSOPHY

Dialectic breaks through the apparent externality of things and reaches an inner bond which unites them. Its progression is an "immanent necessity,"<sup>11</sup> its discovery, an "inner organism of successive potencies."<sup>12</sup> By means of this method, the young Schelling had arrived at his metaphysics of absolute identity. In 1801 he had written: "The absolute identity is not the cause of the universe, but the universe itself."<sup>13</sup>

The positive philosophy rejects the system of identity but not the method of dialectic. Yet the meaning of dialectic is fundamentally altered. Dialectic does indeed move in an "immanent

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truth . . . . Now I have put all my hopes in Schelling . . . ." (*Journals*, ed. and tr. by A. Dru, London-New York-Toronto, 1938, p. 102).

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 104.

<sup>11</sup> II 3.128.

<sup>12</sup> II 3.76.

<sup>13</sup> I 4.129. Nicolai Hartmann rightly comments: "Von allen anderen Formen des philosophischen Monismus unterscheidet sich der Schellingsche dadurch, dass hier nicht nur 'im letzten Grunde' alles eins ist, sondern gerade auch im konkreten Einzelsein" (*Die Philosophie des deutschen Idealismus*, Berlin, 1923, I, p. 160). Schelling wrote in the same work: "The basic error in all philosophy is the presupposition that the absolute Identity has actually externalized itself" (I 4.119). Now the positive philosophy turns to this very "error"!

necessity"; but it does so on the basis of a prior abstraction from what is outside this necessity. For the structures of thought and reality are not identical. Dialectic constructs *a priori* a system of essence, but it can do so only by abstracting from existence. Thus it moves necessarily toward God; but this is a non-existent God, a mere idea. God exists necessarily *if* He exists. *Whether* He exists is a question outside the reach of dialectic.<sup>14</sup>

With this fundamental limitation, the first question arises for the new philosophy. In almost literal anticipation of Heidegger,<sup>15</sup> Schelling asks: "why does anything exist at all? why is there not rather nothing?"<sup>16</sup> The dialectic constructs *a priori* what can be; it knows nothing of existence.

Schelling does not ask: *does* anything exist? The existence of the world is an empirical fact, and the dialectic is object-related from the start: it understands characteristics of the real world. The problem is that dialectic cannot understand the *meaning* of existence; and this means for Schelling that dialectic cannot absorb existence into a system. Dialectic is fragmentary knowledge<sup>17</sup> and must turn to experience for the knowledge of fact.

It might appear, then, that the dialectic constructs *a priori* the nature of the actual world. If so, the positive philosophy would have to answer only a single question: why does this world—which is the only possible world—exist? But this would be to misunderstand Schelling's conception and to reduce it to nonsense. If existence resists dialectical absorption, so does individuality. Reality is not in fact the internal unity which it is in ideal construction. The facts not only appear to, but really do, fall outside each other; and their irrational infinity is as inaccessible to dialectic as the fact of existence itself. Experience encounters, as a brute fact, externality; and along with externality meaning-

<sup>14</sup> Schelling argues this point on many occasions, perhaps most clearly in his critique of Descartes (I 10.15 ff.).

<sup>15</sup> *Was ist Metaphysik?* (Frankfurt a/M, 1949), p. 38.

<sup>16</sup> II 3.7, also II 3.242.

<sup>17</sup> Dialectic is capable of "no actual cognition"; it is dependent on something beyond itself (II 3.152 ff.). Since this "beyond" is, at all levels save the last, experience, the negative philosophy may be called "*a priori* empiricism." For it concerns itself with the *a priori* aspects of a knowledge which is otherwise empirical (II 3.130). Cf. *infra*, note 43.

lessness and evil. Thus the second question arises for the new philosophy: why is what exists in discrepancy with what it ideally ought to be? Why is the world "questionable"?<sup>18</sup>

The questions posed by the positive philosophy may well appear non-sensical. How can one ask for the meaning of the meaningless? The meaningless is either ultimately not meaningless, or else it is a brute fact. Schelling emphatically rejects the former alternative: is he, then, not driven toward a simple acceptance of the facts, surrendering the quest for their meaning as itself meaningless? But this would be to ignore the negative achievement of the dialectic. All empirical fact, while indissoluble into dialectic, is yet subject to all-pervasive dialectical qualifications. Dialectic isolates this character of the facts and thus shows them to be in need of explanation. Because of its abstracting from their factuality, dialectic at the same time reveals itself as incapable of the explanation required. Dialectic is thus "negative philosophy," in a double sense. It negates absolute idealism as being a false philosophy, and empiricism<sup>19</sup> as being no philosophy at all.

Internal unity and externality, the *a priori* meaningful and the *a priori* meaningless, are both real characters of the real world; their togetherness in the same world is the problem requiring a solution. This is the situation which gives rise to the positive philosophy.

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<sup>18</sup> The positive philosophy raises further, derivative, questions. In answering these derivative questions, it becomes philosophy of history and speculative theology. But since we are here merely concerned with Schelling's concept of a positive philosophy we may ignore the derivative questions which determine parts, and concentrate on the primary questions which determine the principles of the positive philosophy. For although Schelling never succeeded in working out any except the historical and theological parts of the positive philosophy, he firmly maintained that that philosophy was one whole, of which history and theology were merely parts. And he rejected sharply any suggestion that the positive philosophy was not metaphysics at all, but dogmatic theology or even apologetics (cf. II 3.174).

<sup>19</sup> Schelling has occasional words of praise for empiricism, but only insofar as it is a "mere, and partly blind, protestation . . . against a one-sided rationalism" (I 10.216).

## 3. THE CRISIS OF THE "NEGATIVE" PHILOSOPHY AND THE "LEAP"

The questions of the positive philosophy are not nonsensical, but can they be answered? *Qua* dialectically qualified, the facts demand an absolute in terms of which they may be explained; but *qua* facts, they can be explained by no mere idea. The first principle of the positive philosophy cannot be an absolute Idea, but only an absolute Fact. But such a fact is beyond all possible human knowledge. For wherever knowledge grasps fact, it is fact dialectically qualified; and wherever it grasps an Absolute, it is mere idea.

Here the negative philosophy carries out its third and most important negation. It has negated relative fact, as being relative; it has negated absolute Idea, as being mere idea. It now discovers that it cannot think of the Absolute other than as idea, and that it can negate it as such only by negating itself as well. The negative philosophy therefore brings about a radical "crisis of reason"<sup>20</sup> and sets the stage for a radical leap.<sup>21</sup>

"The last aim of rational philosophy," says Schelling, "is to reach God as separate from all relative being."<sup>22</sup> This aim it reaches in one sense, but fails to reach in another. Examples are Aristotle's *actus purus*, or the "necessarily existent" of the scho-

<sup>20</sup> Cf., e.g., II 1.565. In this passage Schelling states clearly that there are two elements in this crisis, one theoretical and one that he calls "practical," cf. *infra*, note 28.

<sup>21</sup> Schelling does not actually use the term "leap" in this connection, although it had made its appearance in his writings as early as 1804 (I 6.38). Cf. also in this connection Schelling's assertion that there is a "wide, nasty moat" (*ein garstiger, breiter Graben*) between Hegel's *Logic* and his *Philosophy of Nature* (I 10.154; I 10.213). It is most probable that Schelling writes with Lessing in mind. Lessing uses exactly the same expression when considering the relation between "necessary truths of reason" and "contingent truths of history" (*Werke*, ed. Bornmueller, Leipzig and Vienna, n.d., V, 494-5). And Schelling had earlier used this expression with explicit reference to Lessing (I 5.250). Kierkegaard, too, comments on the Lessing passage, quoting Lessing's words: "Das, das ist der garstige breite Graben, über den ich nicht kommen kann, so oft und ernstlich ich auch den Sprung versucht habe" (*Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, tr. Swenson and Lowrie, Princeton, 1941, p. 90, my italics).

<sup>22</sup> See II 1.413. That this is the aim is evident throughout the entire negative philosophy. The aim is reached when finally the "self declares itself as not-principle and subordinates itself to God" (II 1.560).

lastics. Rational philosophy here has, in its independence, the principle on which everything depends; but it has it as a mere idea. And this means that the end of rational philosophy, far from being the end of all philosophy, involves a paradox requiring a wholly new point of departure. Rational philosophy is driven to the idea of an absolute Individual who necessarily exists; but this idea, *qua* idea, is universal and non-existent. The form and the content of this idea are in necessary contradiction. In its highest idea reason necessarily points beyond itself; but, equally necessarily, it fails to achieve this beyond. Schelling refers to this pointing-beyond when he says that reason, in its crisis, becomes "ec-static."<sup>23</sup>

Rational philosophy here reaches an unavoidable impasse. From the start, it necessarily abstracts from existence; but what it must *mean* in its last term is the pure Existent beyond all essence. But it cannot attain what it means.

This deadlock can be broken only if it is remembered that rational philosophy, as a whole, is merely the abstract expression of a concrete spiritual condition; it has an existential setting. The idea of God is not only the last concept of reason; it is also the highest expression of a spiritual attitude, viz., philosophical contemplation. In contemplation the philosophizing person seeks to sublate in an Absolute, not just existence in general, but his own personal existence. Contemplation is an attempt at self-surrender and self-oblivion. But just as a mere idea will not absorb any existence, so it will not absorb my own. The logical paradox here turns into a personal paradox which the philosopher lives and suffers. "The self might be satisfied with the purely ideal God, if he could remain in this state of contemplation. But this is impossible. The surrender of action cannot be carried out. Action is inevitable . . . the former despair returns."<sup>24</sup>

Thus for objective philosophical reasons, subjective personal interest enters. "The last idea of reason . . . has this peculiarity, that the philosophizing subject cannot be indifferent to its existence or non-existence. Here the watch-word is: *Tua res*

<sup>23</sup> II 3.163.

<sup>24</sup> II 1.560.

*agitur*." <sup>25</sup> The pure Existent is inaccessible to rational detachment because it abstracts from the existence of the thinker.

The finite spirit is in search of the existing God.<sup>26</sup> But in his life he asserts himself and thus has only finite existence; and in his contemplation he has God, but merely in idea. Existence and idea cannot be synthesized in thought. But they can be synthesized in *will*. From the lonely despair brought about by the search for God, a search at once rational and existential, arises the will, not to posit Him—for any such God would again be idea only—but to accept Him, as prior to all thought and experience. Decision is the radical leap from the last idea of the negative to the first principle of the positive philosophy.<sup>27</sup>

This leap is indeed radical and outside all reason. But it is not arbitrary. The predicament from which it arises is the human condition itself, in which rationality itself is rooted.<sup>28</sup> Thus the

<sup>25</sup> II 3.171.

<sup>26</sup> See, e.g., this remarkable passage: "Only now does the individual recognize the abyss between God and himself . . . . Hence he now yearns for God Himself. Him, Him he wants, the God who acts . . . , who, as a factual God, can alone deal with the factual fall, in short, the God who is the Lord of all Being" (II 1.566).

<sup>27</sup> Schelling makes it perfectly clear that the issue is not rationalism vs. irrationalism. The issue is between a philosophy asserting a gap between man and God, and the system of identity, whether in the rationalist version of Hegel or the irrationalist of Schleiermacher. Thus Schelling does not exalt feeling at the expense of reason; for it is open to the same (and worse) objections. Irrationalist idealism implies the deification of feeling rather than reason; and an irrationalism which abandons the doctrine of identity leads to the view that "God is only the creature of our feeling . . . , each religious idea has merely psychological significance" (II 3.154). Because there is a gap between man and God, a leap is required to bridge it; and this Schelling finds in will and decision. "A free action is not a gradual transition, but absolute beginning, pure positing . . . , decision and deed" (II 3.114). It is significant to note in this connection that Schelling does not equate faith with religious feeling, but asserts that it involves an act of will (I 10.183); and we may observe in passing that contemporary existentialist theologians tend to speak of the "decision of faith," whereas idealists are apt to speak of "religious experience." It would seem that the issue between these two schools is not dissimilar to the issue between Schelling and the philosophy of identity.

<sup>28</sup> More precisely, Schelling means the condition of man, not *qua* man, but *qua* individual or existing man. See II 1.569: "We have seen that the self's need to possess God as external to his reason (as other than mere thinking or idea) is practical. But this is not an arbitrary will: it

individual philosopher has the choice only between taking this leap, or remaining within the sphere of the negative philosophy. "The positive philosophy is genuinely free philosophy: the person who does not will it may leave it alone."<sup>29</sup>

#### 4. THE CONCEPTION AND METHOD OF THE POSITIVE PHILOSOPHY

The principle accepted by the leap is by no means an existing God. This would be sheer dogmatism. The leap achieves only what is strictly beyond thought and experience, and yet necessary in order to explain them. The metaphysical principle is individual beyond all universality, existent beyond all essence, and precisely for that reason beyond all thought. The leap from reason into existence has to abandon also God, the highest idea of reason; we are left with an absolute Existent who (or rather which) is unknowable and unthinkable. Schelling calls this existent "*Unvordenkliches Sein*," i.e., that being which is forever prior to thought, and which thought cannot encompass. For purposes of convenience, we shall refer to it by using the English term "absolute Existent."

The absolute Existent is the principle by which the real world is to be explained. It must therefore be related to the world. But this cannot be a necessary relation; for in that case dialectic would encompass the absolute Existent. The absolute Existent, as the Individual beyond all universality, must be outside all dialectic. The relationship can therefore be only one of free will. Free will is Schelling's fundamental existential category. Reason may explain essence; only will can explain existence. "Wherever will enters we deal with actual existence."<sup>30</sup> Free will, for Schelling, transcends all necessity; it is absolute freedom of choice. All free will is therefore a mystery until it acts.<sup>31</sup> The absolute Will

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is a will of spirit which, by an inner necessity, and because of its yearning for liberation, cannot remain satisfied with the mere God-idea. This demand for the existing God cannot arise from theory. But neither can it be a postulate of practical reason. Not, as Kant wants it, this latter, but only the individual as such leads to God. For not the universal in man, but only the individual desires beatitude."

<sup>29</sup> II 3.132.

<sup>30</sup> II 1.579.

<sup>31</sup> II 4.11.

is subject to no pre-existing necessity, whether it be a realm of pre-existing possibilities outside itself or its own essence. Indeed, the absolute Existent has no essence; or rather, if it has an essence, it has itself created it. If the absolute Existent is God, He Himself has made Himself God. The Thomists make much of the mysterious passage in Exodus which they translate: "I am who I am."<sup>32</sup> Schelling translates: "I shall be who I shall be"<sup>33</sup>—a translation which, incidentally, would appear to be more faithful to the Hebrew text.

It might appear that to attribute will to the absolute Existent is inconsistent with its supposed unknowability. This, however, is not the case. We know that the first principle has will because it has actually willed the world. Here lies the core of Schelling's "metaphysical empiricism."<sup>34</sup>

But an unpredictable absolute Will, by itself, is wholly insufficient for the purposes of the positive philosophy. That Will, as far as the evidence of the facts shows, reveals itself, now as a God, now as a devil, now simply as an omnipotent jester, explaining no more than that nothing can be explained. The positive philosophy has made existence, rather than reason, primary. If it is to move a single step from its first principle, it must now derive reason and universality from the absolute Existent which is beyond both.<sup>35</sup>

Moreover, unless this can be done, the first principle itself collapses. The negative philosophy has led up to an absolute Existent by dialectically relativizing all empirical existents; the validity of this procedure depended entirely on the assumption that these dialectical relations have an ontological status; but this assumption the negative philosophy itself could not justify. Unless the positive philosophy can ground dialectical necessity in the absolute Existent which is itself beyond it, the entire negative philosophy

<sup>32</sup> Exodus 3.14.

<sup>33</sup> II 1.171, II 3.269 ff. See also, and especially, the searching discussion in the *Ages of the World*, I 8.263 ff., Bolman, op. cit., 151 ff.

<sup>34</sup> E.g., II 3.113 ff., 129 ff., and numerous other passages. See *infra*, note 43.

<sup>35</sup> E.g., II 1.565: "With the pure That . . . one can do nothing. In order that there should be science, the Universal, the What, must enter, but now as consequent, not antecedent to the That."

collapses, and we are left, not with an absolute Existent, but with as many existents as there are empirical facts: we have landed, not in the positive philosophy, but in empiricism. The negative philosophy, it now becomes clear, has founded the positive philosophy only hypothetically; the positive philosophy must now directly found the negative philosophy, and indirectly, itself.

We might summarize the situation as follows: if an absolute Reason can explain only rationality, but not existence, and if therefore existence, not reason, must be metaphysically ultimate, then this absolute Existence must be the ground, not only of other existence, but of rationality as well. Schelling must therefore ask: "why is there reason? why not unreason?"<sup>36</sup> This is the crucial problem of the positive philosophy; it is, as we shall see, the problem on which it founders.

Schelling proceeds as follows. The absolute Existent and its free Will are *a priori* unknowable. But we can consider *a priori* what free will as such involves. Dialectic may examine the category of free will, or rather, the category of the absolutely free will. What does such an examination exhibit? Free will is freedom to will or not to will. This involves a distinction between two elements, potential will and actual will. And since neither potential nor actual will is, by itself, free to will and not to will, still a third element is involved. This is the synthesis of potency and act, and this alone is free to will and not to will. These three potencies Schelling calls "that which can be" (*das Seinkönnende*), "that which must be" (*das Seinmüssende*), and "that which is to be" (*das Seinsollende*). They are the fundamental categories of the entire positive philosophy.

It must be clearly realized that Schelling does not move from the absolute individual Will to the dialectical category of will; such a move would clearly be impossible. He moves from the category, which is as such an abstract universal, and then seeks to ground it in the absolute Existent.<sup>37</sup> For purposes of con-

<sup>36</sup> I 10.252; II 3.247 ff.

<sup>37</sup> Negative philosophy concerns itself, not with what exists, but with what can exist. At its culminating point (which is at the same time its crisis) it asks how the Ultimate can exist. And it becomes ecstatic in answering this question because the Ultimate must be pure Existence beyond

venience, we shall term the dialectical unity of the three potencies the "absolute Essence." Since the universal does not, as such, exist, the absolute Essence can only be adjective to the absolute Existent. Moreover, it cannot be an adjective constitutive of the absolute Existent; for (as we have seen) the latter cannot enter into the dialectic. Thus the absolute Existent must freely assume its Essence. The absolute Essence, which is the ground of all rationality, is thus in turn grounded, as a primordial accident, in the absolute Existent which is beyond all rationality. Schelling expresses this as follows: "Absolute Spirit is free in relation to itself; to-be-Spirit is for it only a mode of being."<sup>38</sup> "Reason is not the cause of Spirit, but only because [the perfect Spirit] . . . exists is there reason. With this conclusion all philosophical rationalism is destroyed in its foundations."<sup>39</sup>

The positive philosophy has now laid its foundations. It will explain both essence and existence, necessity and freedom, meaning and meaninglessness. It will be able to do so because, on the one hand, the absolute Essence is the ground of all dialectical necessity, and because, on the other, this essence is itself existentially grounded in an act of Will which is not only free itself, but which also imparts to the Essence it grounds, at crucial junctures, radically indeterminate situations.

We shall illustrate the method of the positive philosophy by considering two of these junctures, the creation and the fall.

Creation is the realization of the absolute Essence. By an act of will, the absolute Existent spreads Itself out into the unity of potencies; or, which is the same thing, It makes Itself absolute Spirit. This doctrine differs from pantheism in one crucial respect. The absolute Existent is linked to the creation, not by necessity, but by an act of free will. It does not require it for its own self-realization. Creation is not an *a priori* necessity but an *a posteriori* fact.

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all possibility. The positive philosophy is the inversion of the negative; for here pure Existence is primary, possibility secondary (II 3.155 ff.). For the problems implicit in the transition from Existence to possibility, see further II 1.565.

<sup>38</sup> II 3.256.

<sup>39</sup> II 3.248.

The creation strictly corresponds to the ideal construction of the negative philosophy, with this difference. It is the product of a real will, and therefore a unity of existing forces, not of abstract ideas.<sup>40</sup>

With the doctrine of creation, the positive philosophy has answered two of its three questions. "Why does anything exist? why is there not rather nothing?" This question cannot be answered in terms of relative fact or absolute Idea. Something exists because an absolute Existent has willed it.

The second question is: "why is there reason? why not un-reason?" No rational philosophy could raise, let alone answer this question, since it presupposes what is in question. The positive philosophy answers: there is reason because the absolute Existent has manifested Itself, in the creation, as absolute Spirit.

But has the positive philosophy really answered this question? The creation is by no means an empirical fact; it is an ideal construction. To validate this construction, the positive philosophy must presuppose precisely that absolute rationalism which the doctrine itself puts in question. As we shall see, on this inescapable contradiction the positive philosophy suffers shipwreck.

Schelling's real meaning here is: the absolute Existent is free *whether* to create but not *what* to create. Hence we cannot know *a priori* whether anything will be; but we can know *a priori* what will be if anything is.<sup>41</sup>

Only now is the third question meaningful: "why is what exists in discrepancy with what it ideally ought to be?" Or, as we may now put it: how are externality, meaninglessness and evil possible in a creation which, as such, has none of these? It is this question which had led Schelling, many years earlier, to abandon the system of identity.<sup>42</sup>

We are here faced with a radically new fact. And, as in the case of all new fact, only a new act of will can explain it. Where, in the unity of the three potencies which is the creation, is freedom possible? Of the three potencies, we recall, only the third is free

<sup>40</sup> II 3.244 ff.

<sup>41</sup> This is Schelling's explicit teaching in his earlier *Ages of the World*. I 8.310, Bolman, op. cit., p. 200.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Fackenheim, op. cit., pp. 5 ff.

to will or not to will. This third potency is man, the original man, or man-in-God. His primordial freedom consists in the bare choice between willing and not-willing. For any particular decision presupposes the decision to will at all. The primordial choice of man is between total surrender to the absolute Existent and total self-assertion.

Since the decision is free, no dialectic can encompass it. But dialectic can work out the consequences attendant upon either choice. The decision not to will would leave the creation wholly unchanged. The decision to will would bring about a radical change. In asserting himself, original man would tear himself loose from the absolute Existent; and, since the other two potencies are synthesized only in him, he would cause, by his own fall, the fall of the entire creation. The fall would bring about universal externality, which is the cause of meaninglessness and evil. Has man in fact fallen? Here the positive philosophy stops constructing and points to the facts.

We have indicated enough of the positive philosophy in order to be able to formulate its conception and method. Negative philosophy is not metaphysics, but the search for the metaphysical principle. Its method is purely dialectical; it reveals the facts as in need of explanation, and progressively eliminates what cannot serve as principle of explanation. Its search for the principle is limited in two respects: (i) because it abstracts from existence it cannot itself issue into the first principle; it merely leads to a point at which a radical but unmistakable leap can be made; (ii) because its strictly necessary movement is not an ontological movement, it has, as a whole, a merely hypothetical status. It requires validation by the positive philosophy.

Positive philosophy is metaphysics proper. Its principle is an absolute Existent which, *qua* absolute, is beyond experience, and *qua* existent, beyond thought. It enters into both by an expression of free will. Its first creation is the dialectical unity of the potencies. This creation, on the one hand, validates the negative philosophy, and, on the other, makes construction within the positive philosophy possible. The positive philosophy explains the actual world. Explanation here involves three terms: (i) the absolute Existent, (ii) the dialectical unity of potencies,

(iii) the world of empirical fact. All three terms are required. Only the first term can explain why anything exists. Only the first and second in conjunction can explain the rationality found in the world. And only all three terms in conjunction can explain the togetherness of rationality and irrationality which makes up the actual world. The method of the positive philosophy may be termed "progressive" or "metaphysical empiricism."<sup>43</sup> It starts out, *a priori*, with the absolute Existent; proceeds, still *a priori*, to consider the alternative possibilities implicit in the dialectical unity of potencies; but discovers only *a posteriori* which of these alternatives has become fact. The positive philosophy is thus very far from indiscriminately collecting empirical evidence. It selects for consideration only those facts which, according to its *a priori* principles, can be explained only by a novel cosmic act of will.

### 5. CONCLUDING EVALUATION

It would appear that Schelling was gravely concerned about the problem which in fact is fatal to the entire positive philosophy. For in one of his last lectures he singles it out for treatment. But here, as elsewhere, he failed to solve it.

The problem is indicated by the title of the lecture: "On the Source of the External Verities."<sup>44</sup> Rational truths must have an inherent necessity; but what metaphysics will justify this necessity? After dismissing pre-idealistic metaphysics as inadequate on dialectical grounds, the lecture comes to grips with the crucial alternative: the system of absolute reason, and the positive philosophy. An absolute Reason justifies rationality, but it ex-

<sup>43</sup> See supra note 34. Cf. the following summary: "Not the absolute Prius itself is to be proved; (this is beyond all proof, the absolute Beginning which is in itself certain) . . . But we must prove, as a fact, what derives from it, and thus the Godhood of that Prius. We must prove that it is God and that God exists" (II 3.129). See also this summary of the characteristics of negative and positive philosophy: "Negative philosophy is *a priori* empiricism, i.e., the *a priori* of empiricism, and for that reason itself not empiricism . . . Positive philosophy is empirical apriorism, i.e., the empiricism of the *a priori*, inasmuch as it reveals the Prius, via the Posterius, as God" (II 3.130).

<sup>44</sup> II 1.573-590. The problem is also raised elsewhere; cf., e.g., II 1.331.

plains nothing else; it cannot explain (i) the existence and irrationality of the actual world, (ii) its own existential ground. For "the universal essence exists only if there is an absolute Individual."<sup>45</sup> The first principle, therefore, cannot be a universal Reason; it must be an individual Existent. But if this is so, how are we to justify the necessity indispensable to rationality? Reason cannot flow necessarily from the essence of the absolute Existent, for the latter has no essence. Nor can it be the product of an arbitrary will, for this would make rationality itself an accident, and destroy the *a priori*. Schelling ends up by asserting that reason is a "necessary accident" of the absolute Existent.<sup>46</sup>

But this is surely a mere admission of failure. For if the absolute Essence is in any sense necessary to the absolute Existent, this necessity encompasses the absolute Existent and we have returned to the system of reason; but if the absolute Existent is really beyond reason, the absolute Essence is not a necessary accident, but accident pure and simple. In the terms used earlier in this paper: the transition from the individual Will which is the Absolute to the universal category of free will cannot be made. Schelling himself appears to admit this when he remarks: "Here is the last limit which cannot be transcended."<sup>47</sup>

But this admission is fatal to the whole conception of the positive philosophy. For with it vanishes the right to all *a priori* metaphysical construction. The Absolute might express its will in an indefinite number of ways, rationality being but one of them. Moreover, the absolute Existent itself, as a principle of a cosmic system, becomes indefensible. For the negative philosophy is deprived of its ontological foundation. Dialectic becomes either a mere play of the human mind, justifying no sort of leap, and landing us in empiricism; or else it is merely the dialectic, not of reason-in-reality, but of man-in-his-environment. From such a situation a leap may indeed have to be made; it may even have a certain metaphysical significance; but it will be an entirely different significance, and what is achieved by it cannot be the principle of a cosmic system. To illustrate what may be

<sup>45</sup> II 1.586.

<sup>46</sup> II 1.589; cf. also II 1.314, 331.

<sup>47</sup> II 1.587.

achieved by it we may point to contemporary existentialism, and perhaps even to certain types of pragmatism.

Schelling's positive philosophy illustrates this profound problem: if the dialectical principle is true that there can be only one Absolute, but if at the same time this Absolute cannot be reason itself, how is reason to be grounded? Rationality must be justified in some way; without such a justification speculative metaphysics, at least, is impossible. Schelling's positive philosophy clearly understands this problem. It fails to solve it.

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## HARTMANN'S NEW ONTOLOGY

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### I

NICOLAI HARTMANN might be described as a philosopher who, like many of his contemporaries, joined the movement "back to Kant." Unlike many of these contemporaries, however, Hartmann did not remain within the confines of critical philosophy but kept right on the road leading back until he reached Aristotle with his view of the world as a vast structure of levels related to each other in various ways. As has already been pointed out,<sup>1</sup> Hartmann began his movement away from the Marburg type of Kantianism in the second decade of this century, and his development from that point has been in the direction of a protracted attempt to offer an ontological account of the structure of concrete things. More specifically, he sought to challenge the primacy of the epistemological standpoint; and in its place he put a type of realism, in accordance with which, knowledge is first and foremost knowledge of a world of concrete things and not knowledge of the conditions of knowing or of the structure of the knowledge process. It is of importance that this point be highlighted at the outset because it serves to define both Hartmann's own particular ontological standpoint and his fundamental break with *Erkenntnistheorie*.

Hartmann's development was long and complex. Moreover, it is not easy to follow, and the path leading to the end passes through volumes of considerable scope and length. Apart from his *Ethics* which has had wide circulation among English speaking

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<sup>1</sup> See L. W. Beck's "Nicolai Hartmann's Criticism of Kant's Theory of Knowledge," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* (June 1942), pp. 472-500. He discusses Hartmann's neo-Kantianism and its relation to Kant considered from the latter's own writings and not simply on the basis of the Marburg approach and tenets. Beck is correct in his contention that Hartmann never completely clarified the relation of his own thought to that of the critical philosophy. Whether Beck is also correct in claiming that Hartmann's ontology would, on Kantian grounds, have to be regarded as "dogmatic" is another question and one which can be settled only on the basis of some common agreement as to the proper interpretation of Kant himself.

philosophers, Hartmann's other works are not very well known. *Der Aufbau der Realen Welt* first appeared in 1940, and represents the third part of his *Ontologie*; *Zur Grundlegung der Ontologie*, 1935, constitutes the first part; *Möglichkeit und Wirklichkeit*, 1938, the second; and *Philosophie der Natur*, 1950, the fourth.<sup>2</sup> The small volume *Neue Wege der Ontologie* was written in 1941 and appeared in *Systematische Philosophie*; it was printed separately in 1947 and again in 1949. *Teleologisches Denken* was completed in 1944 (see *Vorwort*), but was not published until 1951. Apparently Hartmann intended it to be published after the appearance of the *Philosophie der Natur* which was delayed until 1950.

Briefly stated, *Aufbau* is Hartmann's most significant ontological work, containing an account, as he puts it, of "those categories which are common to all levels, spheres and realms of being, and which are articulated even in the highest levels of being."<sup>3</sup> *Neue* is a condensed further exposition of what Hartmann calls his "new ontology," in contrast both to ancient ontology ("speculative metaphysics") and critical or epistemological philosophy. *Denken* is a treatment of the category of "finality" as one of pivotal importance for thought in all its forms. Hartmann noted that this category originally formed part of his philosophy of nature and that he was not unaware of the problems to be faced in taking it from its setting among the special categories and giving it a place of special importance for thought at large.

In order to consider Hartmann's philosophy as concisely as possible, it will be necessary to confine discussion to a few basic points. After a preliminary comment on Hartmann's view of the direction of thought, I shall consider the following points: the "new ontology" and its relation to Kant, Aristotle and the idea of

<sup>1</sup> See *Aufbau*, p. vii, where Hartmann refers to his philosophy of nature as the fourth part. This latter work Hartmann regarded as his *special* category doctrine, while *Aufbau* presents his basic ontology or *general* category doctrine.

<sup>2</sup> This statement by Hartmann about his own work is to be found in "German Philosophy in the last Ten Years" (pp. 421-22), an article published in *Mind*, LVIII (Oct. 1949). It contains brief but illuminating comments and helps make clear what is the "new ontology" of which he so often speaks.

a presuppositionless or metaphysically neutral philosophy; Hartmann's concept of categories and levels in reality; the ideas of freedom and autonomy; and finally, the notion of teleology and its particular significance in the development of thought.

According to Hartmann the "natural" attitude or direction of human thought (*intentio recta*) is ontological in the precise sense that it aims at grasping a world of concrete objects which have their being beyond the human mind. He emphatically denies that the first object of thought is thought itself or the process of cognition. Moreover, he refuses to call an ontological approach a "reflective" one, which it must be if, as has been the case in philosophy since Descartes, critical or epistemological analysis is regarded as the "natural" direction of the intellect. Hartmann rejects this whole way of looking at the relationships; for him there is no need of a "return" to ontology because *intentio recta* is always directed toward real objects, and it is only when thought takes an alien turn (*intentio obliqua*) and identifies itself with epistemology that we overlook the "secondary" character of epistemological reflection and come to regard ontology as "reflective."<sup>4</sup> Many passages can be cited which express Hartmann's view on this point. In *Neue* he says, "it lies in the essence of all cognition to be directed not upon itself but toward its object" (p. 15). Or again, in referring to epistemological reflection, he says, "this epistemological reflection is secondary and must be carried through 'against' the natural attitude" (*Ibid.*). Hartmann puts this same stress in another way in *Aufbau* when he discusses the *a priori* character of categories, "Man knows things by means of his categories, but he does not need a knowledge of these categories for the purpose. Knowledge of categories does not come until epistemology (appears), but then knowledge of things does not have to wait for epistemology" (p. 118). "The natural direction of all cognition is toward its object; if therefore cognition wants to grasp its own principles it must turn itself around, turn away from its object, and turn itself back on itself" (*Aufbau*,

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<sup>4</sup> Jacob Taubes has put this point very well in the brief description of Hartmann contained in his recent article, "The Development of the Ontological Question in Recent German Philosophy," this journal, VI (June 1953), p. 656.

p. 119. All translations from *Aufbau* are my own). Further development of Hartmann's criticism of epistemology as a necessary starting point in philosophy is to be found in Section V of *Aufbau, Methodologische Folgerungen* (pp. 576 ff.); this criticism helps to define his own position that all categories either are, or must be construed as, categories which express the structure of the real world. A great deal of what is meant by Hartmann's *realism* consists in nothing more complex than this idea that the "natural" direction of thought is toward objects and their structure, and not toward the mind and its structure. Thus his realism must be understood as a "natural," i.e., non-metaphysical, realism which is more concerned to attack the priority of epistemology and certain metaphysical theses of the past, than it is to put itself forth as a doctrine of the nature of reality in some singular or selective sense.<sup>9</sup>

It might be thought that in thus setting critical philosophy aside in favor of an ontological approach, Hartmann falls back into metaphysics of the sort which Kant condemned. The situation, unfortunately, is more complex than such a judgment would recognize. Actually, Hartmann's realism is of a peculiar sort; not identical with either medieval or modern realism, his view is an attempt to avoid the alternatives of idealism and realism or materialism (considered as strictly metaphysical alternatives) by appeal to the actual world and its structures which he claims cannot be said to manifest any such simple unity as is expressed in idealistic or materialistic monism. There is a sense in which Hartmann's entire approach resembles the ideal of phenomenology. It implies (though Hartmann vigorously denied this) that he has a "presuppositionless" philosophy because his thought involves rejection of metaphysical dilemmas such as freedom and determinism, monism and pluralism, etc., on the ground that whereas these alternatives were devised to meet the needs of speculative metaphysics they failed (for one reason or another) to describe

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<sup>9</sup> It is instructive in this connection to consult Hartmann's article, "Die Anfänge des Schichtungsgedankens in der alt. Philosophie" in *Abhand. der Preuss. Akad. d. Wissensch.* (Nr. 3, 1943), when in calling attention to the "realistic" or ontological character of Aristotle's division of nature, he says, "it is by no means to be considered metaphysically" (p. 20).

and explain the real world. His solution of the problems implicit in these dilemmas usually takes the form of by-passing the alternatives and returning to a description of the concrete world with its levels and categories.\*

It is no accident that Hartmann had to defend himself against the charge that he sought to construct a presuppositionless philosophy. In the preface to *Aufbau*, after considering a question as to whether his philosophy forms a system, he says, "Almost as great as the misunderstanding concerning the question of system, is another misunderstanding which has to do with the 'presuppositions' of philosophy. Those same critics have ascribed to me the idea of a presuppositionless philosophy" (*Aufbau* x.). Hartmann then goes on to deny the charge, pointing out that philosophy does not begin *de novo*, that it must presuppose empirical knowledge, that it is dependent on the work of past philosophers, etc. A careful study, however, of those of his analyses which deal with metaphysical dilemmas will show that although his method is not that of phenomenology, his "transcending" approach remains as indifferent to strictly philosophical alternatives as any bracketing of metaphysical issues could remain. Hartmann was "beyond" most metaphysical issues, although he would hasten to object to this way of putting it, by saying that he was "*diesseits*" rather than "*jenseits*" such issues. This can only mean that to confine oneself to the analysis of the natural world as he attempted to do is to remain within the given and to avoid any involvement in "speculative" issues. To claim to be "*jenseits*," on the other hand, is to have offered a metaphysical resolution of metaphysical dilemmas similar to the synthetic method of Hegel.

In understanding Hartmann's view of ontology, some confusion can be avoided if it is borne in mind that, to put the matter epigrammatically, he was a believer in ontology but not in metaphysics. Apart from passages in which the two terms are used loosely as synonyms for "philosophy," Hartmann generally under-

\* See, for example, *Denken*, p. 29, where both finalists and mechanists are criticized for "The conclusion from false alternatives." Cf. *Aufbau*, p. 189, where Hartmann rejects as inadequate a philosophical dialectic which proceeds through antitheses on the ground that the world is not two-levelled, but contains at least four levels. See also pp. 464 ff.

stood by "metaphysics" a speculative theory of the nature of being and its basic unity; and by "ontology" an analysis of the real world aimed at disclosing its levels and their constituent categories, together with the laws governing the numerous interrelationships involved. Ontology on this view is an empirical discipline in the sense that it presupposes a given reality, specific knowledge of that reality through the sciences, and the results of previous attempts to construe the world from a philosophic standpoint. Metaphysics is speculative, and generally understands the question of being as at the same time an inquiry into what is highest or best in existence. Hartmann separates the two questions from each other, and takes the position that inquiry into the structure of being is not a search for what is of the highest value or worth.<sup>7</sup> Of considerable importance for the distinction between ontology and metaphysics is the fact that he exempts the former from Kant's criticism. In *Neue*, Hartmann says: "... the Kantian Critique was not really directed against the foundation of the old ontology, but rather against the rational-speculative metaphysics which had been built on it."<sup>8</sup>

What, more specifically, is the "new ontology," and what is its content?<sup>9</sup> The answer, at the risk of oversimplification, appears to be as follows: the central contention of Hartmann's ontology is that the real world of concrete things is *structured* through levels or spheres (*Schichten*) each of which contains specific

<sup>7</sup> See *Aufbau*, pp. 94-95, for criticism of any "axiological" basis of categories.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. *Denken*, pp. 35 ff., for a distinction between popular and speculative metaphysics, neither of which qualifies as ontology. Most of what Hartmann has to say about previous metaphysics makes it clear that he regards it as an inquiry into the nature of being and God in the precise sense of, for example, Parmenides' identification of being and thought, or Leibniz' characterization of being as force or power. Ontology, on the other hand, is for him an analytic discipline whose aim is to set forth the structure (*Aufbau*, *Gefüge*) of given reality and to exhibit it as a system of inter-related categories. It cannot be denied that there is a genuine Kantian element here; attention is shifted away from a speculative theory of *being* to an analysis of *structure* with the final result that a *system of categories* replaces such doctrines of the unity of being as were characteristic of traditional metaphysics. Whereas metaphysics looks for a unitary quality of being, ontology seeks categorical structure.

categories related to each other by definite laws.<sup>9</sup> The levels themselves are related by storable laws which define (a) the specific type of dependence of one level upon another, and (b) the relative independence of a given level over against both those above it and below. Central to this hierarchical view of the world is Hartmann's position regarding the nature and status of categories.

In both *Aufbau* and *Neue* there is lengthy discussion of the role of categories in scientific and philosophical thought since the time of Aristotle and before. Hartmann notes that in the tradition of metaphysical rationalism categories were regarded as predicates of real being, and that the most basic or universal categories were regarded as normative for all being and not for some limited segment alone. In the tradition of such rationalism the categories of thought and those of being were held to be identical, but in the development of thought since Descartes it is just this assumption (regardless of its particular form) which comes into question. And in the course of the discussion, the idea of a category itself undergoes transformation. Categories cease to be regarded as real predicates and instead come to be taken simply as forms of thought (*Begriffe*) which are, as in Kant, peculiarly tied to the process of judgment. Hartmann has just this shift of emphasis in mind when he says, "with the rise of the newer theory of knowledge, the problem of the *a priori* returned to the center of interest" (*Aufbau*, pp. 5-6), with the result that categories become limited to the employment of human understanding and their justification becomes a matter of the validity of *a priori* thought. Carrying this line out consistently, categories are said to be wholly internal to thought or to the knowing mind, and their validity as regards given reality becomes problematic. Hartmann was unable to accept either alternative; on the one hand he rejected the thorough-going identity thesis (see *Aufbau*, pp. 136 ff.) because it is speculative, transcending the limits of experience, and because it presupposes more unity in the world than we have a

<sup>9</sup> Whatever unity the real world may be said to possess, it possesses in virtue of these laws. See *Aufbau*, pp. 574 ff., for development of the thesis that the categorial laws "are the true unity pattern of the real world" and that they replace the all-embracing world unities of deductive or monistic metaphysics.

warrant for asserting. On the other hand, he rejected the reduction of categories to forms of thought, first because this interpretation perverts the natural bent of thought by making knowledge primarily of cognition itself rather than of objects, and because it abstracts from the structure of the real world which both science and philosophy aim to disclose.<sup>10</sup>

Hartmann's own view is intended to overcome what he regarded as the errors of the two main tendencies. For him, both general and special categories are forms of thought, but they are expressions of structures in the real world at the same time, something which is possible because, as a knowing animal, man is a structured part of the same world which he seeks to know, and his knowledge is a process which takes place in that world (*Neue*, p. 17). There is for Hartmann no "transcendental deduction" of the categories, if this means that the identity of thought categories and those of concrete experienced things is to be "deduced." Hartmann's view (see *Denken*, p. 45) is that Kant did not perform, nor did he intend to perform a deduction of this sort. What Kant sought to accomplish instead was a justification of the *objective validity* of categories as such within the range of possible experience, and Hartmann, despite the fact that he denies the categories to be necessary conditions of experience, appears to accept Kant's analysis. The main difference, however, is that Hartmann does not believe in justifying categories in general. Nor does he hold that the criterion for such justification can be found within the subjective conditions of knowing. His emphasis is more on the actual success with which our particular categories describe and explain the concrete world. A brief statement from *Neue* makes this quite clear; after considering Kant's analysis and the possibility of a "neue Kritik," Hartmann says, "The difference is only that the limit cannot be drawn in general for all categories,

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<sup>10</sup> Needless to say, Hartmann was even more definite in his rejection of a third possibility that if categories are neither real predicates nor simply forms of thought, they are "linguistic" or functions of language. He disposed of this view on the grounds that the relation of *similarity* holds between objects as a matter of fact, and all similarity implies an element of identity in real structure and is not simply dependent on our use of words. See *Aufbau*, pp. 83 ff.

but must be determined for each one particularly, and that the criteria for this purpose do not rest in instances of knowledge but in those of being."

On Hartmann's view categories can only be obtained (the problem of Kant's "metaphysical deduction") from an analysis of concrete objects and the empirical knowledge concerning their behavior in our possession; categories can only be justified (the problem of Kant's "transcendental deduction") by their actual pervasiveness in the natural world and the adequacy with which they express the structure of all individual things. Thus, it would appear that Hartmann, while regarding his categories as categories of real being, cannot accept as their foundation either the thesis of identity considered as an ultimate metaphysical pronouncement, or the epistemological justification which would limit categories to forms of thought. Ontology, it is not too much to say, stands somewhere between old metaphysics and modern critical philosophy.

Thus far only passing reference has been made to the very important idea of levels (*Schichten*) in Hartmann's thought. His interest in categories clearly derives from his Kantianism, but the idea of levels comes from his concern for time and process<sup>11</sup> and especially from his studies in ancient philosophy, particularly the thought of Aristotle. In a paper referred to previously, "Die Anfänge des Schichtungsgedankens in der Alten Philosophie," Hartmann explored the idea of making divisions in reality as exemplified by Plato's three-fold division of the soul and Aristotle's view of the world as a vast system of levels or types of being. In *Aufbau* (ch. 20, pp. 188 ff.) Hartmann gives a highly condensed version of this paper calling attention to the long history of the idea of levels and the difficulty of holding fast to the distinctness and relative independence of the different spheres of being in the face of cosmic monism (e.g. Plotinus) which tends to swallow all heterogeneity into unity and destroy what appeared to Hartmann to be the significance of the level approach. Following Aristotle's lead, Hartmann maintains that there are four basic levels—

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<sup>11</sup> See, for example, "Zeitlichkeit and Substantialität" in *Blätter für Deutsche Philosophie*, XII (1938-39).

corporeal things, organic bodies, psychical life and corporate or "political" being. The greatest portion of *Aufbau* consists in analysis of these levels, their defining characteristics through the categories and, most important of all, a statement of certain laws governing them in their interrelation.

The categorial laws (*die kategorialen Gesetze*) considered in the third part of *Aufbau* (chapters 42-60) are more important than any other single part of Hartmann's ontology. They are of greater moment than the pairs of the fundamental categories (positive, negative; identity, difference; universality, individuality) and even than the oppositions in being, or antinomies. The reason for such importance is that they are essentially related to the problem of world-unity. Hartmann could not accept any simple monism of being, but he was nevertheless concerned over the unity of the world. (See, for example, the clear and direct statement of this in *Neue*, pp. 85 ff.) Whatever unity the world has in his thought comes from the categorial laws, both those of independence or autonomy and those of dependence, though the latter are more important (*Aufbau*, chapters 55-60, cf. *Neue*, p. 3 note) because they have to do with continuity between levels and the "hanging together," so to speak, of the spheres.

There are four main categorial laws which concern the *validity, coherence, hierarchical order, and dependence* of the categories. These laws are not to be confused with the four laws of dependence (*Abhängigkeit*) which Hartmann singled out for special attention. Since a complete account of these laws cannot be given here, it must suffice to point out the four main principles underlying the four laws just mentioned: 1) categories have their being as structures of concrete things and apart from these they have no validity (*Geltung*); 2) categories have no isolated existence for themselves, but are united and determined by the whole categorial structure (*Kohärenz*); 3) categories of the lower levels are contained in the higher, but not vice-versa (*Schichtung*); 4) dependence of categories is asymmetrical, with the higher categories dependent on the lower, though the former have "weiter Spielraum" (*Dependenz*). Special attention is paid by Hartmann to the particular laws of dependence (based on, but distinct from, the *principle* of dependence) and with these he believed he had

succeeded in dealing with problems of cosmic unity in a way which avoids the errors of monism.

The four laws of dependence concern the specific relations obtaining between higher and lower levels of being: 1) higher categories are dependent on the lower ones so that "in the series of levels the strength (*Stärke*) and the 'height' (*Höhe*) of the categories stand in inverse proportion" (*Neue*, p. 63); 2) the categories of a lower stratum constitute the basic "material" of the higher, but the lower have an "indifferent" status in the precise sense that the lower categories persist without the higher, whereas the converse of this proposition does not hold; 3) the lower categories limit the play of the higher but do not completely determine their *Form* and *Eigenart*; 4) the higher categories contain "new" or emergent elements which *despite their dependence on the lower*, have a type of autonomy not effective *in* the lower spheres, but effective *over* them.

These laws of dependence are employed by Hartmann in a subtle way in order to do justice to both the unity in the world and its undeniable heterogeneity. Unlike all forms of monism, whether materialistic or idealistic, Hartmann's view allows for a degree of independence (*Unabhängigkeit*) to the levels of being. He refused to derive the levels from a single principle of unity, and he rejected any selection of one level as that to which all others can be reduced. In *Neue* (pp. 16-17) he criticized ancient philosophy not only for overlooking the heterogeneity of phenomena through an undue regard for unity, but also for denying independence and autonomy to higher levels. Hartmann contends that dependence and autonomy are not incompatible, and that dependence of the higher on the lower does not preclude autonomy for the higher levels. This view is integral to Hartmann's theory of human freedom and will be considered critically in the next section.

Within the framework of general ontology he regards as essential to his doctrine of categories, the view that there are "gaps" in reality, that all is not continuity, and that, although higher categories are dependent on lower ones, there are characteristics and functions peculiar to the higher levels which have their own

autonomy.<sup>12</sup> Through his concept of autonomy, Hartmann hoped to avoid a monistic reductionism, on the one hand, and the assumption of more unity and continuity in the world than is warranted, on the other. Moreover, his idea of autonomy was intended to contribute to an understanding of human freedom and a resolution of some of the problems connected with it.

## II

Hartmann's central contention is that human freedom is the actualization in the sphere of human being (*Menschenwesen*) of a categorial autonomy similar to that enjoyed by all higher levels in the total structure of being. His way of establishing this thesis is instructive not only as regards the theory of freedom, but is also illustrative of his "transcending" approach and its setting aside of traditional metaphysical dilemmas in favor of a third possibility.<sup>13</sup>

Hartmann rejected the determinism-free will dilemma as a false one (see *Aufbau*, pp. 565 ff.), first, because from the free will side it assumes that there is no freedom unless some events are uncaused (in a sense of "cause" legitimate in a science like mechanics), and secondly, because from the opposite side, a dogmatic monism is assumed which requires that the nature of the lower levels completely determines events at all levels. Over against such a way of posing the problem, Hartmann set his view of levels and their relations of dependence and independence. He criticized materialism, on the one hand, for ignoring the genuine multiplicity and heterogeneity of regions in the world, and for denying any freedom in nature and man by destroying the autonomy of the

<sup>12</sup> Note Hartmann's criticism of Hegel, *Neue*, p. 78, for making higher categories all powerful and thus overlooking the conditioning function of lower ones.

<sup>13</sup> In order to decide whether Hartmann's own ontology is actually one more instance of metaphysics in the sense in which it was criticized by Kant, it is necessary to decide whether Hartmann's "third possibilities" are in the same universe of discourse as the alternatives they are designed to transcend. If the answer is "yes," then he is engaged in speculative metaphysics (which is no less so for being "realistic"); if the answer is "no," then the responsibility rests with Hartmann to make clear what the status of his ontological structure really is.

higher levels. Idealism, on the other hand, particularly in the thorough-going form it assumed in Hegel, is in error because it gives complete autonomy and power to the higher levels and denies their genuine dependence on the lower levels. The main reason Hartmann made this two-sided criticism is that he thinks both autonomy and dependence are real facts and that they can be shown to be compatible. "Freedom in dependence—that is no contradiction" (*Neue*; p. 75). This is the principle on which he ultimately stands; the higher levels—human and social being—express themselves in ways that are in accord with their own essential natures, although they are at the same time dependent on the nature of the lower levels which go to make them up.

Hartmann was resting solidly on the Kantian idea of freedom as autonomy and self-dependence, though he sought to bridge the gap between the human and other levels by his idea that each higher level has an autonomy or "freedom" over its predecessors which is similar to that enjoyed by man. In criticizing past theories of freedom, Hartmann says:

They did not suspect that Freedom in the level structure of the world is a relation which repeats itself from stage to stage, and one which is set up wherever a group of higher determining factors appears. Moreover they could not know that human freedom considered ontologically is only a special case of the thorough-going autonomy of higher forms over the lower (*Neue*, p. 99. Cf. *Aufbau*, pp. 563 ff.).

Thus instead of following the lead of many previous philosophers in trying to show that the freedom of man is a special and unique sort of phenomenon, Hartmann reverses the situation and holds that only if it is possible to substantiate a "freedom in dependence" throughout the whole structure of the world, can the special phenomenon of human freedom be maintained and explained.

There can be no doubt that such a view holds out possibilities of doing justice to the continuity between the human and other levels of being and that it takes the whole range of natural phenomena within its scope. But the question remains whether what is characteristic of the human level (and hence what is autonomous at that level) is not precisely a freedom which has no genuine correlate at any other level. Perhaps Hartmann has failed

to be true to his Kantian heritage at just this point—at all levels lower than the human, structure is “given” in a more radically fixed way (not *absolutely* fixed, to be sure) than is the structure of man. It is the peculiar nature of the human level that its structure contains something that in the nature of the case cannot be “given,” namely the *power*, exercisable under specific conditions, of determining the self not simply by a self which is *given* but by one which is *chosen*. Lower levels may have “Spielraum,” as Hartmann puts it, but that is a margin which still operates within a fixity of possibility. An acorn has potentialities to greater things, but it cannot, even at the apex of its autonomy over the inorganic level, become a pine tree. Man, on the other hand, has an enormous range of choice within the “nature” which is given him, and he may exercise this in such a way as even to descend to one of the lower levels, i.e. he may become a beast. Hartmann overlooks a principle which he might have learned from the Renaissance philosophers and which has a peculiar importance for any theory of levels. He overlooks the idea of man as a being who can to a degree *actively participate* in the levels of being. To be sure, Hartmann recognizes that man has a peculiar position because he embodies so many levels, but he does not stress man’s ability through his freedom to move from one level to another—man may fall almost to the level of the beasts or he may rise almost to the level of the angels, and this *power* is not adequately represented by calling attention to the levels which are illustrated in man or the lower categories which return on his level. Man’s ability to slide, so to speak, along the scale of being has no counterpart at any lower level. *This ability is his freedom.*

### III

The discussion of the category of finality in *Denken* cannot be regarded as a constituent part of Hartmann’s ontology.<sup>14</sup> This

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<sup>14</sup> *Denken* is a difficult work to assess partly because it is a consideration of issues raised by a category in the philosophy of nature, and partly because Hartmann’s own views do not stand out clearly enough, due to his tendency to write as an observer of the philosophical situation.

category finds its proper place in the philosophy of nature and it is significant that of the three basic forms of teleology distinguished (1. teleology of processes, 2. teleology of the forms themselves, 3. teleology of the whole) that of natural processes is said to be the most important (See *Denken*, pp. 7-8). Yet despite this fact Hartmann calls the concept "a hybrid category" because in addition to its specific place in natural philosophy it has "*the tendency to force itself into everything*." In fact it is this tendency which led Hartmann to single out teleology as a concept worthy of special attention. It is not too much to say that he found it present in some degree as a *Motiv* behind every form of thought, the naive consciousness, popular and speculative metaphysics and scientific thought. Hartmann compares his own treatment with Kant's *Critique of Judgment* and notes that while the latter is confined to teleology in biology and metaphysics, what is needed is an analysis which goes back to the motives of thought involved in any serious raising of the question *Wozu*. Hartmann's idea is that finality is not simply a feature of the concrete world calling for analysis and interpretation like similar features, but that concern for ends and purposes is essentially related to the process of thought itself.

Hartmann distinguishes four types or groups of motives influencing teleological thinking; one is bound up with the strictly historical character of thought and the others are perennial in the sense that they are bound up with the basic situation of man attempting to understand his world and to orient himself in it. What might be called the historical teleology is simply the historical conditions of thought, the fact that it always takes place in a context and a tradition, and that the tradition continues to exercise a powerful influence even in those who seek to reinterpret and transform it.

The other three motives distinguished are those of the naive consciousness, the scientific consciousness, and the metaphysical consciousness. In the naive consciousness the quest for *Sinn* is uppermost and almost without any reflection whatsoever, the human mind expecting that all events have some meaning in the sense that they have a direction or that they contribute to some end. The scientific consciousness takes an entirely different view; it is no

longer determined solely by the circumstances of daily life and thought, but concerns itself with questions of causal dependence. It even proposes to interpret natural process in such a way as to render any reference to final causes or purposes irrelevant. When this happens, according to Hartmann, questions of finalism arise in a new form (not the least because man cannot set aside his direct experience of purposeful action). It then becomes necessary to ask first whether the causal relation can be reduced to a purely temporal sequence, and secondly, whether a completely adequate account of any process can be given without some reference to the ends in which it terminates. Thus there arises within science itself the struggle between a mechanical and a teleological account of organic process. Hartmann regarded this dispute as unresolvable because based on a false alternative. He found elements of strength and weakness in both positions and rejected both in their uncompromising forms on the grounds that there are elements of truth in each (see *Denken*, pp. 29-30).

Teleology enters directly into the metaphysical consciousness, both as popular and as speculative. In the former, religious questions are uppermost and the "philosophical concept of God is . . . from the very beginning, pure teleology through and through" (*Denken*, p. 36). Popular metaphysics is closely tied to the naive consciousness and develops the human concern for destiny, seeking some justification for the prevalence of evil in a world which is purposefully ordered. In speculative metaphysics, teleological considerations likewise play a large part, but they are developed more thoroughly and the motives of the naive consciousness are of lesser importance. Questions arise concerning the teleological arrangement of the forms in nature and the position occupied by the higher forms. According to Hartmann, the deepest motives of idealist metaphysics are to be found in the teleological characteristics of *Geist*—meaning, purpose, value—all of which, when made essential, lead to a view of reality in which higher categories determine the lower in a thorough-going teleology. Moreover, speculative metaphysics directs attention to the obscurity of the category of causality and raises questions as to whether any non-teleological interpretation of reality can do justice to a *potentiality* which the world undeniably exhibits.

Ethical considerations also enter the picture, and value metaphysics, along with metaphysics of freedom, base themselves upon the primacy of purpose and its essential place in any adequate theory of the world.

This delineation of the motives behind the prevalence of the idea of purpose in thought was intended by Hartmann as an introduction to his more detailed consideration of types of metaphysics essentially dependent on such teleology. Hartmann is less satisfying, however, in his positive treatment of the issues involved than he was in describing what impels man to think in this way. The main reason for his failure to enter more directly into discussion of the ultimate significance of purpose in reality is that he never came to a settled opinion as regards the position occupied by man (the level of *human being*) in the structure of the real world. There is no better way of rounding out this discussion of Hartmann's ontology than to focus attention on the question which has played so large a part in continental thought throughout the past four decades.

It should be borne in mind that insofar as there was any philosophical community in Germany during Hartmann's later years it was one greatly influenced by two types of thought, *Lebensphilosophie* and *Existenz*, both of which put great stress on the nature of man and the concerns peculiar to his own life. Equally characteristic of both schools of thought is a tendency to allow the world of concrete natural processes apart from man to fall from metaphysical sight. Hartmann, on the other hand, was convinced of the philosophical importance of a study of the structure of the natural world and was inclined to stress the natural setting within which human life takes place. Man, he constantly repeated, cannot be understood apart from the world in which he exists. He never openly attacked either existentialism or the philosophy of life, but his criticism of pure *activism* and of *anthropocentrism* makes it clear enough that he regarded these positions as onesided, inclined to leave nature out of account on the one hand, and to define reality by exclusive reference to man on the other. Yet, despite this, there are many points at which Hartmann approved the view that the structure of man in its full proportions gives genuine insight into the level structure of

the real world. For example, in his article on the origin of *Schichtungsgedanken* in ancient philosophy he specifically calls attention to the *ontological* character of Aristotle's division of the human soul. Two statements are of particular importance in this regard. In calling Aristotle's anthropology a part of ontology he says, "The level of human being is unambiguously rooted in the cosmos" (op. cit., p. 12). And in his criticism of 19th century historians of philosophy for overlooking the ontological character of Aristotle's thought, he gave two reasons why Aristotle's division of the soul has the character of a doctrine of being: the first is that analysis of man gives insight into the nature of being, because man is an essential being and "man himself is a being with levels, and the levels of the world are repeated in him" (op. cit., p. 19), and the second is that the parts of the soul exhibit the same laws of dependence and independence manifested in all the levels of reality.

The bearing of these considerations on Hartmann's discussion of finality and teleology in thought is clear enough: if man is an essential being, well "rooted" in the cosmos, and if his structure gives insight into the structure of reality, why was Hartmann so reluctant to give man's teleological concern for his own being and purpose a place of greater importance in his ontology? Again and again he referred to man's quest for meaning and purpose and his flight from "the meaningless and the accidental," but only to set this aside as part of the naive or primitive consciousness or of the religious concern. Presumably these aspects of human being must be put down to the "subjective" side of man or to the "modes" of being, and have no ultimate ontological standing. It is highly likely that Hartmann's original decision to distinguish and separate the question of being from the question what is highest (*Wert*) led him to his final conclusion. His analysis of *Zweck* extends that of Kant by disclosing the quest for meaning and purpose which underlies *all* human intellectual efforts, but he stopped short of taking a final stand on many of the issues raised by the appearance of teleological concern in man's own being. If the structure of the real world, as Hartmann was so fond of repeating, can be discovered only by an analysis of all the features exhibited by its concrete constituents, why does this concern, well rooted in man, not have ultimate import for ontology? It may

well be that in Hartmann's thought ethics was more important than ontology *after all*, for in considering a world in which a teleology of value would be the dominant note he said, "man would have no separate existence and no opportunity, for he would have no task in the world and would not be called to be its shaper and co-creator" (*Denken*, p. 115). This is surely the voice of Kant; the act has the priority over the fact, the ethical life over all theories about the nature of the real.

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## CRITICAL STUDIES

### SOME RECENT WORKS ON ARISTOTLE AND ONE ON PLATO

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INTERPRETING Aristotle and Plato is a difficult enterprise, and at many crucial points there is no consensus among scholars as to the best interpretation. In America, where these classical thinkers are regarded as important participants in contemporary metaphysical speculation, there is general philosophic interest in completing our interpretations. Recently, two tendencies have been developing: on the one hand, as in McKeon's approach to Aristotle, there is an attempt to find philosophic unity by careful re-examination of primary sources; on the other, as in Jaeger's approach to Aristotle, there is an attempt to find a developmental unity by tracing the growth of a position through the sources. The latter approach, revealing a genetic unity, would suggest the importance of studying passages in their proper chronological order; the former, looking for a unity of thought apart from genetic continuity, would suggest the importance of studying passages in their proper logical order.<sup>1</sup> Past attempts to handle both dimensions at once have led to unsatisfactory treatment both of philosophic and of historical problems. At present, there is a visible tendency toward the modest and methodical limitation of studies to one of these dimensions, with resulting gains in the two lines of interpretation. Some day the two must once more be joined in full scale studies, but it seems wise to know what we are joining before we leap to conclusions about the conjunction.

<sup>1</sup> Werner Jaeger, *Aristotle: Fundamentals of the History of his Development* (Oxford, 1934); Richard McKeon, Editor's introductions in *Basic Work of Aristotle* (New York, 1941); *Introduction to Aristotle* (New York, 1947); also "Aristotle's Conception of Language and the Arts of Language," *Classical Philology*, XLI (1946), pp. 193-206; *ibid.* XLII (1947), pp. 21-50; "Aristotle's Conception of the Development and the Nature of Scientific Method," *J. Hist. Ideas*, VIII (1947), pp. 3-44; "Plato and Aristotle as Historians: A Study of Method in the History of Ideas," *Ethics*, LI (1940), pp. 66-101.

A second feature of current studies, which will be pointed out below, is the apparent lack of awareness on the part of German scholars of significant studies in English, so that material is ignored which is relevant and essential to their theses. This leads to unnecessary duplication of effort, and indicates a need for improved channels of communication.

## I

Considerable English and American work continues to be directed toward making translations of primary sources more readily available. The sources selected and their treatment show the two tendencies, noted above, toward either purely philosophic or historical-genetic interpretation.

The study of fragments of his early works as a possible key to Aristotle's intellectual development is fascinating and essential, if what we wish is to reconstruct the development of his thought from the philosophy of Plato. To date, however, except for some added insight into *Metaphysics* A 9, the fragments have contributed little to an attempt to find philosophic unity in Aristotle's mature philosophy. Discovery of new fragments, and new studies of the material, have led Ross to carry out the project of adding a translation of Selected Fragments to the Oxford translation of Aristotle.<sup>2</sup> The volume now makes the most interesting sources available to the reader who has not had the time or equipment to work with them before. The translations are excellent. It is unfortunate that Ross did not make the volume larger, because much material which may not in itself have philosophic interest is relevant to the attempt to trace Aristotle's intellectual development.

Aristotle's merit and position as a mathematician has presented difficult problems, whether we approach them *a priori* by asking what an "Aristotelian" mathematics would be, or more historically, by asking what Aristotle's place in the history of Greek mathematics was, and what was his acquaintance with it. The problem is made peculiarly acute by the assertions of some

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<sup>2</sup> *The Works of Aristotle translated into English; XII: Select Fragments* (Oxford, 1952).

Platonists, notably Taylor, that Aristotle failed to understand Platonism because he had not the mathematical skill to understand it.<sup>3</sup> In the historical dimension, Heath's *Mathematics in Aristotle* is a definitive scholarly work.<sup>4</sup> Mathematical passages are collected, translated precisely in the light of their historic context, and commented on. The number of such passages and the competence they show makes Aristotle an important source of information for the history of mathematics, and seems to require us to give up any theory that rests on Aristotle's alleged mathematical incompetence. The case for Aristotle as a good mathematician could be made stronger by pointing out explicitly how Aristotle's arguments against the infinite assume that transfinite sets would have the properties later used by Cantor to define transfinite number; further historical work, in set-theory, for example, is likely to raise rather than lower Heath's estimate.

Apostle's work, *Aristotle's Philosophy of Mathematics*, is an interesting counterpart to Heath's.<sup>5</sup> Apostle sets out to present Aristotle's passages bearing on mathematics as an Aristotelian science. Where Heath's interest is in "mathematics" in a modern sense, Apostle's book shows that Aristotle conceived the science in another way, and that this conception colors all of the aspects of this science. At first, it may seem disappointing to the reader that Apostle has been so deliberate a purist in limiting himself to Aristotle's own ideas and text (I note only six references beyond it in the study). Consequently, the statements are only Aristotle's own, except for a few judicious transitions and supplements, and are frequently very obscure. But if the reader will note his own tendency to read modern mathematical concepts into parts of Aristotle where they would probably not follow from Aristotle's own principles, he will begin to appreciate the need of Apostle's elaborate precautions against such deflection. The most general conclusions this new systematic presentation of material invites are, first, that Aristotle had distinctive notions of

<sup>3</sup> A. E. Taylor, *Aristotle* (London, n.d.); see also *Plato: the Man and his Work* (new edn., New York, 1936), pp. 503-16.

<sup>4</sup> Sir Thomas Heath, *Mathematics in Aristotle* (Oxford, 1948).

<sup>5</sup> Hippocrates Apostle, *Aristotle's Philosophy of Mathematics* (Chicago, 1952).

the foundations of mathematics which were systematically connected to his criticisms of the Academy (criticisms which are certainly outrageous if they are meant to follow from modern mathematical presuppositions); and, second, that we have enough source material to permit finding out, by further study, just what these foundations and connections are.

Two other English translations, an enlarged translation of selected passages by Philip Wheelwright and a translation of the *Metaphysics* by Richard Hope, add to available English versions of source material.\* In each case, many translations are better than one, because the shadings and possible meanings of such complex texts as these can be appreciated only through comparison of a number of competent renderings. There is a basic semantic problem faced by both translators: between works, and within the *Metaphysics* between books, Aristotle often conveys a meaning by using a given key term in a sense altered by context. The "meaning" is a function both of the constant sense this term has through its various uses, and of the deviation from this sense introduced in the new context. Hope tries to make his work precise by appending an analytical index of the shifting meanings of key terms, and cross-referring terms in his English rendering to that index. Wheelwright includes transliterations of key terms in parentheses after his English translations of them. Both devices are helpful, but constant reference to Hope's index is awkward, and the common meanings seem not vividly given. Wheelwright's transliteration, on the other hand, might use more underscoring of the variant meanings. It seems that both together (particularly if Hope's index could be re-cast in a bold schematic form) would be preferable to either alone. Probably only a very rigorous advocate of "the text alone" would advise using Hope's edition with any but a most advanced reader. The *Metaphysics* presented without critical notes or indication of alternative interpretations is rough going, and such a presentation may even seem

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\* Philip Wheelwright, *Aristotle: Selections from Seven Books* (enlarged edition, New York, 1951); Richard Hope, *Aristotle's Metaphysics: Newly translated as a postscript to natural science, with an analytical index of technical terms* (New York, 1952).

misleading, to those who believe that the book is a rather loose compilation. The proper use of Wheelwright's key passages and of Hope's literal text is a question which depends ultimately on how one should study philosophy. It is, at any rate, a gain to have these new translations and to be able to see their devices for more precise rendering of meaning.

## II

The most brilliant and provocative studies attempting interpretation of primary sources as unified philosophical exposition take the form of insisting that a given document makes philosophic sense if we read it carefully and sensitively. Bruno Liebrucks' study, *Platons Entwicklung zur Dialektik*, for example, suggests a unity and structure in Plato's *Parmenides* which would restore this dialogue from its various interpretations as joke, logic textbook, parody of Megarian logicians, or excursion into mysticism, to a place as important and incisive philosophy.<sup>7</sup> Briefly Liebrucks asserts that the hypotheses about the one are answers to the difficulties met by the theory of forms earlier in the dialogue, and that the argument demonstrates that forms must exist, but cannot be "simply located" if knowledge is to be possible. This interpretation had already been suggested, with a diagram, by A. E. Taylor, whose work Liebrucks does not mention; but Taylor had been unable to see how in fact the compressed text could be interpreted in the light of this development alone.<sup>8</sup> Liebrucks has not given a line-by-line commentary to defend his point, and it will be illuminating to see how well further studies can do so; as it stands, however, the study is brilliant and persuasive. There is, however, one major difficulty with the interpretation. Liebrucks' conclusion seems to run into flat contradiction with the text of the dialogue itself. The dialogue ends by denying the intelligibility of either complete isolation or complete diffusion of the forms; but the hypotheses which render knowledge possible,

<sup>7</sup> Bruno Liebrucks, *Platons Entwicklung zur Dialektik* (Frankfurt, 1949).

<sup>8</sup> A. E. Taylor, *Plato's Parmenides* (Oxford, 1934), pp. 35-37.

and should be the constructive aspect of the dialogue, lead logically to a view of complete diffusion.<sup>9</sup>

Of quite another kind, the study of analogy in two Greek passages by A. Rivier also operates on primary sources, with an admirable objectivity and precision.<sup>10</sup> The careful dissection of the internal structure of the analogy in Heraclitus' Fragment 12 is a model of method for similar work on fragmentary material.

Still a third way of working with primary sources is that of Jan van der Meulen, who has written a book on the doctrine of the mean in Aristotle in which he tries to see what results if we bring to the reading of classical texts a new philosophical sensitivity, in this case one inspired by Heidegger.<sup>11</sup> The result is a discovery in Aristotle of a tension between abstract formalization and dynamic togetherness. If we want to read Aristotle as something of an Existentialist, this can be done by making the "mean" refer to a fusion together in the concrete, not to a formalizable mathematical relation in the abstract. The basic tension is certainly present in Aristotle, and brought out by this new study. But to an impartial reader, it seems that Aristotle himself rejects the resolution that a contemporary Existentialist would embrace. For at each point Aristotle's context makes the "mean" intermediate in the category of *quantity*; which means that we are not dealing with the substantial concreteness of the situation, but with a formalized abstraction.<sup>12</sup> One unexpected and suggestive feature of this study of the doctrine in its various occurrences

<sup>9</sup> *Parmenides* 166 B.8-C.6.

<sup>10</sup> André Rivier, *Un Emploi archaïque de l'analogie chez Héraclite et Thucydide* (Lausanne, 1952).

<sup>11</sup> Jan van der Meulen, *Aristoteles: Die Mitte in seinem Denken* (Meisenheim/Glan, 1951). See pp. vii-x, and the Bibliography, p. 293, where *Sein und Zeit I* is one of the two titles in the section of "Systematische Werke."

<sup>12</sup> For instance, throughout the logic the middle term is intermediate in extension; in meteorology or astronomy, the mean is intermediate in position; in physiology, it is intermediate in qualitative intensity because it is intermediate in position; in the discussion of ethics, the illustrations suggest that the mean is intermediate in whatever quantitative units are relevant; and so on. Van der Meulen does not cite Lukasiewicz's work on Aristotle's logic, nor does he take account of Ross's adoption of the view that the logic is basically "formal" and therefore at the opposite pole from any dynamic logic of the sort an Existentialist would approve.

throughout Aristotle's writings is its suggestion that in his practice, if not in his theory, Aristotle's use of mathematical analogy was almost Pythagorean.<sup>13</sup> Van der Meulen does not make, and would probably reject, this suggestion; but I find it very strongly made by the careful collection and ordering of the passages in his study.

### III

Work is also being done from the historical side, in the attempt to see the development of complex systems as a way of interpreting and understanding them. One of the most interesting studies which seems to fall in this category is Paul Wilpert's *Zwei aristotelische Frühschriften über die Ideenlehre*.<sup>14</sup> In this book, Aristotle's *On Ideas* and *On the Good* are examined in detail. Wilpert tries to show that these works are best interpreted by assuming an esoteric doctrine in the Academy which they report and criticize. Drawing on Stenzel and Hartmann, he presents clearly the transformation of an Academic theory that retained an identity of the order of logic with that of being into an Aristotelian critique denying this identity. The clarity and detail of this study are both of a high order; to the work as a whole, however, three objections may be made. First, Wilpert makes no mention of the work of H. F. Cherniss. But Cherniss has presented a strong case for denying that there ever was any esoteric doctrine in the Academy.<sup>15</sup> It would be reassuring to the reader familiar with this

<sup>13</sup> Once the suggestion is made, the constant metaphor of "cycle" occurs to the reader as another "mathematical metaphor," like the mean. There turns out to be historical confirmation of this notion: in Ross's *Fragments*, 109. Simplicius reports a direct influence of Archytas on Aristotle's *Selection of Contraries*; and the list of works includes one *On Archytas*, one *On the Pythagoreans*, and an *Epitome of the Timaeus and Archytas* (from which frag. 206 Rose, translated by Ross [p. 147] as from *On Archytas*, is probably taken). This also suggests a new interpretation of *Metaphysics* N 6, with its reference to a Pythagorean table.

<sup>14</sup> Paul Wilpert, *Zwei aristotelische Frühschriften über die Ideenlehre* (Regensburg, 1949).

<sup>15</sup> Harold F. Cherniss, *The Riddle of the Early Academy* (Berkeley, 1945); *Aristotle's Criticism of Plato and the Academy*, I (Baltimore, 1944). Wilpert's notion of an "esoteric doctrine" is rather that of an interim position generally held by the Academy at some stage of exploration of the

argument to have Wilpert deal in more detail with the question whether any such doctrine existed, before determining what its content must have been.<sup>16</sup> Second, the reconstruction based on *On Ideas* requires us to think of the Academy as holding a theory *limiting* the world of forms drastically. But the Dialogues (especially the *Parmenides*) and the Seventh Letter record a continuous speculative development of a theory *extending* this realm. This seems to make it very hard to accommodate the alternative as ever having been an official inner doctrine of the school, for the extension is sensible historically and philosophically, whereas a simultaneous limitation is not. Third, the reconstructed doctrines would be vulnerable to very simple criticism, and this is not true of Plato's position generally.

The study of Aristotle by Josef Zürcher cuts the Gordian knots we have been trying to untie by dividing the works of Aristotle into an exoteric group, now almost wholly lost, held to be written by Aristotle himself (as a loyal Platonist) and an esoteric group, which we still have, held to have been written mainly by Theophrastus, editing Aristotle's notes into a naturalistic rejection of all Platonism.<sup>17</sup> If this is true, it is not surprising that our "Theophrastianized" texts present scholarly problems, since they are a strange mixture of internally inconsistent positions: without recognition of their double authorship, we will not then find either genetic or philosophic unity in them.<sup>18</sup> This audacious thesis is clearly and temperately defended, by an argument resting upon

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theory of forms than that of a secret or occult metaphysics which remained the official view of Plato's inner circle in the last years of his life. But such a stage could hardly be an official position and yet leave no traces other than Aristotle's paraphrases of its existence. Cherniss' argument, directed basically at more ambitious notions of an "esoteric doctrine," still seems cogent against Wilpert's view.

<sup>16</sup> On the other hand, it is not hard to believe that various discussions in the Academy suggested to Aristotle a fruitful line of speculation, and that, following this out, he paraphrased *not* what was official Academic philosophy at any time, but what in his own speculative scheme the official Academic position *meant*. This would mean that the key to the paraphrase lay in certain distinctions given a new importance by Aristotle, and presupposed as valid and necessary in his paraphrasing.

<sup>17</sup> Josef Zürcher, *Aristoteles Werk und Geist* (Paderborn, 1952).

<sup>18</sup> Quantitatively, Theophrastean corrections and glosses would account for 80 to 90 percent of the later "esoteric" writings.

the cumulative effect of several convergent lines of evidence. The evidence breaks into stylometric study, apparent quotations from post-Aristotelian authors (notably Euclid) in the texts, internal inconsistencies of doctrine (where presumably Theophrastus added corrective material to his original), testimony of ancient writers who agree that Aristotle was a Platonist, the appearance of ideas and facts presumably discovered after the death of Aristotle, and the paraphrases of the teaching of the Academy.

The stylometric argument is inconclusive. Style may vary from three causes: different authorship, different form, and different subject-matter; the interesting facts Zürcher presents have not been explicitly tested to see if either of the latter two of these might be their explanation.<sup>19</sup> The passages that are very like Euclid's *Elements* would help to prove Zürcher's thesis only if 1) Aristotle was completely a non-mathematician or 2) Euclid was so original that he would not incorporate material from a common source which Aristotle might have used. Zürcher accepts both of these premises. On his own grounds, he could not defend his assertion that Aristotle was a non-mathematician, for the evidence for this widespread belief comes from passages that Zürcher claims Theophrastus wrote, and the evidence of the Aristotelian fragments seems rather to show the contrary. The really serious defect in this line of argument, however, is Zürcher's failure to take account of Heath; for the latter's study of Greek mathematics indicates quite clearly not only that Aristotle and Euclid could have, but that they did have, an earlier *Elements* as a common source.<sup>20</sup>

The treatment of internal inconsistency, again, does not take account of McKeon; the latter's suggestion that Aristotelian meta-

<sup>19</sup> For example, if *alla men* appears frequently, this may be a sign of early style, or of relatively controversial subject-matter. In the *Metaphysics* it appears often in Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Zeta, Mu, Nu, and seldom in Delta, Epsilon and Eta. Since the latter three books are didactic where the former all pose and resolve alternatives dialectically, this stylistic difference might be read as a function of content, not of date of composition. The range of style as between polished published work, compressed lecture-notes, and personal notebooks can be very wide.

<sup>20</sup> Sir Thomas Heath, *Greek Mathematics*, I, pp. 170-217 ("Progress in the *Elements* down to Plato's Time"), and 373-416 ("Analysis of the *Elements* [of Euclid]") give summaries of the conclusions Heath developed on this point.

physics is a third position meant to mediate Platonism and atomism must be given its due attention. Failure to consider this possibility will, of course, lead the reader who holds that a metaphysics must be *either* an idealism or a materialism to find constant inconsistencies, wherever McKeon would see a balanced third view.<sup>21</sup> This seems to be Zürcher's approach, but his evidence shows only that *either* there are internal inconsistencies *or* that Aristotle was (or thought he was) uniting two traditions in a balanced middle view. In passing, one may note that a modern reader approaching Kant with the analogous conviction that metaphysics must mean either rationalism or empiricism would find the same type of internal inconsistency throughout the critical philosophy, but this is not evidence for double authorship of the Critiques.

Again, ancient writers who called Aristotle a Platonist could have known his "esoteric" as well as the "exoteric" writings. Zürcher's argument here would be very strong if this were not possible; but proof that it is lies no more remote in time than A. E. Taylor's *Aristotle*, where these very "Theophrastianized" works are read by a scholar as proving Aristotle's thorough basic Platonism, with only some erroneous "refinements" added.<sup>22</sup> The determination of when a given "fact" was current is harder than one who has not studied the history of science would suppose. It is certainly not *a priori* unlikely that later editors might correct some passages in the light of later discoveries, but to make the extent of this as great as Zürcher suggests is not reasonable, and not established by the instances he cites. For example, some reading of primary sources in connection with Greek genetics has seemed to me to show that the new ideas of heredity which Zürcher attributes to Theophrastus (and for which he commends him) were known to the Pythagoreans and Empedocles.<sup>23</sup> A number of other apparently interpolated facts may turn out to have been known in Aristotle's time.

The paraphrase of Plato remains baffling, but in itself it does

<sup>21</sup> See note 1, above.

<sup>22</sup> A. E. Taylor, *Aristotle*.

<sup>23</sup> See *J. of Heredity*, XLII (1951), pp. 301-303; XL (1949), pp. 49-50; XLIII (1952), pp. 86-88.

not seem to call for so drastic an explanation.<sup>24</sup> Nevertheless, this is a challenging study; until we can get some general agreement on either a purely philosophic or a genetic interpretation of Aristotle's work, Zürcher's hypothesis will not have been disproved.

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<sup>24</sup> Zürcher's own thesis, that preoccupation with "participation" characterizes post-Platonic work in the Academy rather than Plato's own doctrine of a paradigm-copy relation of forms and imitations of them, seems to run counter to the evidence of the later dialogues; compare Liebrucks' study, cited above, and A. E. Taylor's treatment (in his *Plato*) of the *Euthydemus* for evidence that "participation" was already a concern of Plato's in his middle dialogues.

## WHAT IS BEING?

ELIZABETH G. SALMON

AMONG "scholastic philosophers" what is not taken for granted is the meaning of "being." That notion has a meaning that is paradoxically both evident and elusively mysterious. And it is well to study some outstanding "scholastic" writers to note that even though they may say that being is what is first known, and that everything is known in terms of being, they find it difficult, and differ sharply in their explanation of what is meant by being. As M. Gilson has noted:

True enough being is the first thing that falls into the intellect of man, but it is also the last object which a philosopher may hope fully to comprehend and adequately express.<sup>1</sup>

This critical study will cover studies in being by F. Van Steenberghen,<sup>2</sup> G. Smith,<sup>3</sup> J. F. Anderson,<sup>4</sup> and G. Esser.<sup>5</sup> Yet if each metaphysician has such difficulty in understanding and in expressing the meaning of "being," one who is comparing these different expressions may be excused if he fail to give full justice to each in that comparison. It can only be hoped that in the attempt to understand these worthwhile expositions of the meaning of "being" one may aid in penetrating that difficult notion and so advance to a deeper and more unified understanding.

*Ontology* by F. Van Steenberghen, *Metaphysica Generalis* by E. G. Esser, and *Natural Theology* by G. Smith were written as textbooks. All these authors see the metaphysical knowledge of God not as a distinct science, but as the conclusion of the philos-

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<sup>1</sup> Etienne Gilson, "Wisdom and Love in St. Thomas," Marquette Lecture, Milwaukee, Wis., p. 21.

<sup>2</sup> Canon F. Van Steenberghen, *Ontology*, tr. Rev. M. J. Flynn (New York, Jos. F. Wagner, Inc., 1952).

<sup>3</sup> Gerald Smith, *Natural Theology* (New York, MacMillan Company, 1951).

<sup>4</sup> James F. Anderson, *The Cause of Being* (St. Louis, Herder Book Co., 1952).

<sup>5</sup> Gerard Esser, *Metaphysica Generalis* (Techney, Ill., 1952).

ophy of being or metaphysics. Thus, though one book may stress more the metaphysics as developed in that conclusion, yet all must and do develop what is meant by "being," and this meaning is essential to an understanding of each one's position and of his book.

*The Cause of Being* by Dr. Anderson is not strictly a textbook in metaphysics. Rather it treats of the specific problem, "What can cause the existence, as such, the actual being of things?" This problem is raised out of the very text of St. Thomas, and the fullness of his answer is brought out by a discussion of the objections historically centered in and around his work. The framework demands some knowledge of the texts of St. Thomas, but the speculative insight and reasoning that Dr. Anderson so clearly brings out are relevant to philosophic thought today, whether it be found in the field of metaphysics, mathematics, or physics. But as in the other three books, so in Dr. Anderson's; his thought is intelligible only in terms of the fundamental meaning of "being."

Let us try, then, to examine the notion of being in these four volumes. M. Van Steenberghe holds that the object of ontology is forced upon us in epistemology.<sup>6</sup> His ontology is given as a critical philosophy with a certain order, one which the author feels is a necessary metaphysical order.<sup>7</sup> He implies that without that order a full justification cannot be given to the ontological thesis presented, nor could metaphysics as such be justified. Now epistemology "considers being from the point of view proper to that science, that is, as an element making up consciousness; ontology studies being considered in itself."<sup>8</sup> But since being (or the objective aspect) is given in the object of consciousness, one finds in his epistemology the absolute norm of knowledge; at the same time this norm can become the object of ontology, for the norm is "the affirmation of existence, being in the sense of affirming the existence of something."<sup>9</sup> And this affirmation coincides with

<sup>6</sup> Van Steenberghe, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17, p. 94, p. 103, p. 225.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

<sup>9</sup> Van Steenberghe, *Epistemology*, tr. M. J. Flynn (New York, Jos. F. Wagner, Inc., 1949), p. 169.

the primary affirmation of epistemology, which is that "consciousness exists." This means that I can consciously know something-that-is. This knowledge includes both a subjective pole and an objective pole. It is objective in so far as it is a conscious expression of an object. And I can affirm that this object and this affirmation necessarily have a meaning. Moreover a little reflection will show that one can make no affirmation without some objective meaning being implied in it. An affirmation makes explicit that, as the object is given in consciousness, it is as it is given. Or the affirmation is a "conscious expression of a datum, present to consciousness." As expressing this datum, it expresses the objective content. Thus a content as real, has a certain evidence "that is a certain clarity of being which forces itself on consciousness and expresses itself in the obligation which we feel to yield to the evident object when judging."<sup>10</sup>

Thus "being or the real" is the first object of affirmation, that is, being as such or the real as such. These expressions are synonymous and they are also considered synonymous with "something" or "something exists." And being or the real is contained in the first judgment because if I do not affirm, at least, implicitly, that something exists, no other affirmation is possible.

Here it seems that the point which should be scrutinized is what exactly is implied in "something exists." In other words what is the exact connotation given "existence"? Note too, that since every judgment affirms existence "at least implicitly," it becomes clear that in some judgments one does not directly affirm existence but that ultimately, at least as a necessary condition for affirmation, one must refer to some existence. And ultimately, it might be asked, is there for us any privileged existence? That is to ask: is there any difference between reality or being as indirectly referring to a condition of affirmation, and between reality or being as affirmed in a judgment of existence? It seems that the answer is given by Van Steenberghen in the following sentence: "An experience which would not be an experience of a reality would be an experience of nothing . . . . This experience will remain the same, no matter what unconscious

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 177.

factors might have conditioned it, and whatever be the origin, basic nature, or ontological state of the real which is present to my consciousness." <sup>11</sup>

Thus, being is given in any experience or rather in the unity of the "I" experiencing, but the existence of the "I" is not a "privileged experience," nor, may we add, is the actual existence which might be perceived by the "I," a privileged experience.<sup>12</sup> Yet the existence both of the "I" and of some actual existent are fundamental as ultimate conditions of experience. But the notion of being seems primarily concerned with the real as given—with a unity and intelligibility of the known as known with a certain indifference toward the mode of its existential state. It seems one could equally speak of the real as found in an illusion or in an actual thing. Both bespeak real being, an object which we must affirm to be what it is. And intelligence is seen as the faculty which can grasp this idea of being or the real in any experience.

M. Van Steenberghen goes on to show that this idea of being is abstracted, that is, seized as separated from the corporeal, the concrete individual. The idea of being abstracts from all that cuts it off or particularizes one thing from another. In that sense it expresses the least possible determination, and one could speak of the notion of being as the most abstract.<sup>13</sup> Yet this, he points out, is not exactly true since all is being. The notion must also express that which particularizes and in that sense it does not abstract from anything. Rather this notion of being is a conceptualization, though vague, of the concrete real, and vaguely it really expresses all aspects of it. So it is, as one might say, imperfectly abstracted.

Thus, if being really expresses all that is alike in real things and also all that particularizes them because that also is real, the notion of being is not opposed to anything except non-being. Every datum is being and being can express this datum or any datum. A color is being; a sound is being; I am being. All these

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<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 181.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 182.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 184.

expressions can be transposed into one "unique concept of the concept of being."<sup>14</sup>

From this M. Van Steenberghen goes on to say that though the totality of one's experience is not equal to the realm of all that is, yet "if there exists anything outside my experience, 'this outside' can be and is adequately expressed by the concept being."<sup>15</sup> This total inclusion he calls the transcendental extension of the notion of being, or the real as having a certain unity and as opposed only to nothing. Here one wonders if he has not overstressed this unity, the somethingness of the data known, to the detriment of the actual existent and so made less convincing to his readers the inherent contradiction of a being that exists or can exist but is not an existent. The problem as he poses it is: Is there a being that is not intelligible? This is answered easily if, from the first point of view, it is realized that although I do not know all things that may be, it is contradictory to conceive of any existence that is not an existent. There is thus no being that could not be understood as a being. However, if one asks, "Is there something real that could not be a datum or could not be seen as coming under the real as a condition of a datum?" the answer is more difficult. Such a formulation does not make the transcendental character of being immediately evident. It shows too, I think, that there is a notion of being, in what might be termed the ultimate conditions of M. Van Steenberghen's notion of being, which is a more fundamental meaning than that which he includes in his very notion of being.

Since he holds that the concept of being has such a transcendental extension it follows for him that one must affirm the existence of "an absolute or unconditioned reality."<sup>16</sup> If the idea of being expresses everything that is, it also expresses a totality and this totality is opposed to nothing, and therefore could not depend as total and so be conditioned.

In short then my idea of being which represents the totality or reality represents an absolute object which is not conditioned or caused . . . .

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 185.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 186.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 187.

An uncaused reality has what it needs to exist . . . is its own reason for existence; it must be; it cannot not be.<sup>17</sup>

This notion of totality with its necessity, brings out perhaps more strongly the point referred to above, that is, that the real, as the something that exists, is for M. Van Steenberghen indifferently the thing as actually existing, or existing as an idea, or indirectly referred to as the condition of an existent. There is not any privileged mode of existence, and one wonders if existence is really ever expressed directly in such a position. The direct reference seems to be to something that is intelligible, though this intelligibility may have as its ultimate condition some existence. Yet the direct reference to the actual existence does not seem of utmost importance. So the existence of the totality as totality seems to be on a par with the existence of the concrete real. Thus it appears that the object as an intelligible datum refers indifferently to the actual existent individual or to the "representation of an absolute or unconditioned object" which as a totality does not exist as an individual.

M. Van Steenberghen's further development of the notion of being in his *Ontology* points out that, as first given, existence is just a fact; it has no necessity about it. But from the fact of my actual experience is conceived the idea of being, a representation that is abstract, universal, and stable." Again he stresses that the idea of being brings out "the common value which is hidden in every object of experience,"<sup>18</sup> and that metaphysics or ontology studies the "common value." He sees the existential judgments, "this is" and "this is real," as expressing the fundamental value found in any object of experience and which one expresses as the idea of being. It is this notion of being that is primitive and irreducible, and not the "conceptual duality 'essence' and 'existence' or the 'essence existence' relation."<sup>20</sup> There is no concept that opposes this concept but that of non-being. It is the "first of all" and all concepts imply it. All other concepts "are

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 187-88.

<sup>18</sup> *Ontology*, p. 21.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 22.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 28.

participations, particularizations and modes of it." <sup>21</sup> Moreover it is given first solely as a fact. He seems to deny that in that fact there is given any evidence of necessity. And again it might be asked if existence in this context is not stressed more as a "mode of" than as the actual? Any mode, such as the imagined, the remembered, or the given in consciousness, is more an expression of an existent than the actual existent directly perceived by us. For M. Van Steenberghen, being is found in everything or anything that is not non-being, and it is this reality of everything, "abstracted," at least vaguely, from all that particularizes and diversifies, that is contained in this notion.

When we seize an object as existing, as being, as real, this means that we discover in it, by the light of our intellect a certain characteristic which affects it completely. From the point of view of this characteristic the datum does not oppose anything, it is not strictly speaking alien to any other datum; it is related to every other datum. <sup>22</sup>

The judgment then of existence seems to express this common reality, this analogical or imperfect similarity. Upon the seizing of this notion of common reality one seizes also the "existence of an absolute and unconditioned reality." And this is the necessary and unshakable foundation of metaphysics. <sup>23</sup>

Note that being as first given—as something existent—is given as a fact with no necessity. But one may ask what does no necessity mean? I am, is a fact: then I am this, but not that. And I am dependent. So I am a being that is a fact and also dependent, conditioned, relative. But that with respect to which I am conditioned or dependent must be seen from some angle as the absolute upon which this relative is dependent. Yet this being in turn may be relative; so it is not "absolutely absolute." But then is not the relative fact also given as in some sense absolute? And isn't it a little difficult to see each individual as merely a fact and relative, and only the existence which belongs to the real-taken-as-a-whole as absolute? Moreover the whole is absolute only in a negative

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 24.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 31.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 39.

fashion as non-dependent on non-being. The foundation of these notions of relative and absolute is difficult to discern. It is implied that they are justified through the critical order, but to me they are more primitive than the development brought about through that order. Is not anything that is, in as much as it is, necessary and absolute? What is "pure" fact?

M. Van Steenberghen considers his notion of being to differ from that held generally by modern Scholastics.<sup>24</sup> Although not mentioning specifically to whom he refers, he does say that he will not consider being, that which is the subject of existence, as exercising or signifying existence. Such expressions, though they are held to account for the notion of being as both actual and possible, convey, he feels, the idea that one could consider "existence" apart or separated from essence. Thus essence would be considered to have a degree of necessity, while existence would be considered as purely contingent and contingently related to the essence. His criticism of any disjunction or separation of essence and existence and any expression that implies such treatment is justified. Being for him is rightly both essence and existence but the force of this seems somewhat lost when he stresses being as the fundamental common reality whose primary metaphysical significance does not bespeak the distinction in reality between subject and act, between essence and existence. This tends to the other extreme from separation.

When he says that absolute reality exists he is not directly speaking about the existence of an absolute as an individual. Fundamentally he so speaks of the absolute because he is speaking primarily of the necessity of something being something, since we make meaningful affirmations concerning it. He stresses the necessity of intelligibility as primary, though in origin it rests on an experienced existence; he does not stress being, as intellectually expressing the actuality of this existence.

Fr. Gerard Smith's work, because of its subtlety and wit, may not at first be as welcome to the student. But it is delightfully rewarding to those who will return to re-think. His fundamental insight differs from that of M. Van Steenberghen. It is

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 42.

not that both do not contemplate being. They do. But what they say about it is not the same.

Fr. Smith shows first of all that one does not adequately describe being if one describes it in terms of felt or sensible qualities, or in terms of quantitative or mathematical properties. For if one is saying that something is being, one is saying that something exists; and if then one says a being is a thing with these qualities, sensible or quantitative, one is saying that "to be" means to be these qualities.

Certainly, as Fr. Smith points out, one begins by describing a thing by such qualities as these; but that cannot be the ultimate designation of a thing, because there are other things which are and yet which must be described by sensible or quantitative properties. Yet if of both of these things, one can say "they are alike in terms of being," one may ask then the fundamental question: "what is it to be a being?"<sup>25</sup> Fr. Smith holds that the answer to that question is philosophy. He then goes on to say that philosophy has two branches: Philosophy of Nature, and First Philosophy or Metaphysics.

He does not stress here the significance of this division but for one reading these books together it stresses a characteristic difference between his position and that of M. Van Steenberghe. M. Van Steenberghe throughout refers to the basis of ontology as seen from the object of epistemology. On the other hand Fr. Smith will not go into a critique of knowledge first, since that would be a critique of the knowledge of being as sensible and mobile. For him man looks at being and sees it. True, he would, I think, say that the philosophy of Nature can study man as a sensible mobile being, knowing sensible mobile beings, and ask what man must be to be such a being knowing such beings. But what is fundamental is that being is, and for him a discussion of what knowledge involves entails a decision on what "to be" means. He considers that there is no question of why being is being. Existence as such, he holds, raises for us no questions. It is only the plurality and multiplicity of existing things that raise the questions. Fundamentally we see being as being—that is, that

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<sup>25</sup> Smith, *Natural Theology*, p. 9.

which exists or is possible of existence. Or, as he humorously but accurately puts it, we see two aspects of the existent, the thing as "iser" and as "ising". The metaphysician must account for "isers" in terms of their "ising."

Using a vocabulary that M. Van Steenberghen seems to reject, he insists that it is self-evident that there must be a subject of the act of existence. But this does not mean, as it does in M. Van Steenberghen's work, that the subject of being "could be divided from its being or act of existence."<sup>26</sup> If it were, there would be no subject. Yet the act of existing is not identical with the subject of existence, for if it were, one would have to say man is or exists because he is a man. And the "to be" would be to be man. But experience shows two things: change and plurality of things. Any change will show one that if to exist is identical with the subject, then "to be" means to be that subject, and it rules out all other things as beings. So seeing the plurality of things, one understands that this thing is not another thing yet both are existent. Thus plurality shows that the subject of the act of existing is not the act of existence. The act of existence makes a thing to be itself—not a common reality. The paradox and difficulty lies in this: to be being is to be a subject with its own act of existing. Each is one, yet there are a plurality of existing things.<sup>27</sup>

Fr. Smith then points out that our knowledge of this unity and plurality of existing things is a *knowledge* that is transcendental and analogical.<sup>28</sup> Here, I think, is evident the difference that separates Fr. Smith's position from that of M. Van Steenberghen. Fr. Smith begins directly with the existing being and stresses as the most characteristic note of being that it is *actually itself*. Being expresses that a thing *is*—not an idea of being or a fundamental common reality. It is primarily our knowledge of being that stresses the notion of common reality because we, in our way of knowing, tend to conceptualize. True, also there is a basis for the transcendental and analogical notion of being, but the perfection of being is lost if we do not stress that that which is, is the subject of the act of existence which makes the existent to

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 13.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 13.

be itself. True also one can readily see that "to be" must be something that exists, and as such being is opposed to that which cannot exist. But, I think, in this position "something that exists" is seen more as a law of being than as a common notion, or a concept of a fundamental reality, or a common intelligibility of which the "many" are modes.

This metaphysics is existential in that it stresses as its object a subject in terms of its being or ising, or act of existence—not in terms of the reality of any datum as being (a man), or in terms of an intelligible, that is, what it is, in which the subject and its act are absolutely undifferentiated.

Fr. Smith would speak of the judgment of existence as emphasizing the act of existing which could not be properly expressed by a concept. M. Van Steenberghen would speak of the judgment of existence as emphasizing the being which exists and which as *ens*, or a noun, could be conceptualized at least after an imperfect abstraction. Both would agree, I think, that judgments of existence express both these aspects. They differ on what aspects of being the judgment of existence primarily stresses, and then they differ on what existence primarily means.

For Fr. Smith, there is a certain primary privileged experience, that is, the experience of existents, and for us these are "the singular, sensible, the actual, the contingent."<sup>29</sup> Being as known, or in its state as knowledge, is the universal, the intelligible, the possible, the necessary, which "even though existent in experience as known has not the same privileged status."<sup>30</sup>

Existents must introduce an object into knowledge and maintain it there. Existents must introduce an object into knowledge, else we cannot explain the evident fact that we know things. Existents must maintain objects in knowledge, else we cannot say what can and must be—this is science—because we never would know what actually is.<sup>31</sup>

This basic difference in the notion of being as expressed by M. Van Steenberghen and Fr. Smith is, I think, borne out by Prof. Wild's reading and agreement with M. Van Steenberghen.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 37.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p. 37.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 40.

Prof. Wild holds that being is what pervades all experience and in this experience there is no privileged data.<sup>32</sup> This whole that is given is opposed to nothing but it is present as an awareness of a vague confused datum. In M. Van Steenberghen's position being is, I think, presented with the substantial character stressed, because of his emphasis on intellectual knowledge; while Prof. Wild, more logically from the epistemological beginnings, sees the datum or being with less substantial significance. M. Van Steenberghen's difficulty with a whole of being that is substantial, or Prof. Wild's difficulty with substance as not being immediately given, is obviated if existents are seen as primary.

This difference in fundamental point of view between Fr. Smith and M. Van Steenberghen is also evident in M. Van Steenberghen's proof of the existence of God or of Absolute Being. M. Van Steenberghen sums up his argument thus:

Major. That which is not intelligible by itself must be explained by something other than itself.

Minor. A finite being which is similar to other finite beings is not intelligible by itself.

Conclusion. A finite being which is similar to others must be explained by something other than itself.<sup>33</sup>

The stress here is on being and its essential similarity: its intelligible likeness.

Now according to Fr. Smith, "proof for both essentialism and existentialism is a linking of the unknown to the known with the result that the unknown becomes known."<sup>34</sup> But in one case there is the going from one intelligibility as effect to another as cause while in the other case the proof goes from one existent to the positing of another as existent.<sup>35</sup>

Thus if M. Van Steenberghen's proof starts with an idea of being or an existent as an existent that is intelligible, as it seems to, his proof for the absolute is to an intelligible as cause. In fact unless M. Van Steenberghen concedes the privileged status of the

<sup>32</sup> John Wild, "Phenomenology and Metaphysics," in *The Return to Reason* (Chicago, 1953).

<sup>33</sup> Van Steenberghen, *Ontology*, p. 99.

<sup>34</sup> Smith, *Natural Theol.*, p. 35.

<sup>35</sup> Op. cit., p. 35.

sensible existent for us, his reasoning, even though he is speaking of the idea of being or what exists, has about it the abstract necessity of mathematical reasoning but not the assurance of a proof of an existent.

Yet what M. Van Steenberghen is saying is nothing superficial. He is, I think, trying to express the intelligibility of being in an absolute sense, as St. Thomas speaks of the number six in *Quodlibet* viii, 7., and which Fr. Smith brilliantly illustrates on pages 43-44. The difficulty is: can one ever in any fashion abstract being as existent so as to conceive it in this absolute sense? I do not think so, nor apparently does Fr. Smith, because for him our knowledge of being is of the actual existent which for us is an understanding of felt being.<sup>36</sup>

The metaphysician is not limited to sensible existence; but the understood experience of it is essential to him in order to gain an appreciation of the act of existence—in order that he understand that being means that each existent exercises the act of existence proportional to its stature in the realm of being. Fr. Smith is not saying that each entity has the meaning of being independently of whether it is considered as existing in the sensible or in the mind, nor that it is a mode of participation in a totality of reality as opposed merely to non-being.

Dr. Anderson emphasizes the same fundamental character in his notion of being:

... by "existence" is not meant a kind of minimum common basis of reality, but an act which is the maximum principle of what is in any and every order of being or perfection.<sup>37</sup>

And although again he says "... it is an act common in infinitely diverse ways to everything that exists," he doesn't mean it is a common act. The distinction between subjects of existence and act of existence are to him fundamental, for it is only by the recognition of act of existence as the maximum principle in any order of being, that one is led to see a cause not of this kind of being or that kind but rather of existence itself of any or all kinds.

M. Van Steenberghen can pose the cause of being or the

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 70.

<sup>37</sup> *Cause of Being*, p. 22.

absolute without explicit consideration of these constitutive principles, though he holds that the ultimate justification of the problem of change is found upon the fact that the finite being is not identical with its existence. M. Van Steenberghen goes so far as to say that in order "to avoid all equivocation, it would seem better to restrict the notions of potency and act to the dynamic order, as Aristotle himself did."<sup>38</sup> On page 181, he considers transcendental notions of being as expressing a static sense of being; but for Dr. Anderson metaphysics expresses the basic meaning of potentiality.

This most rudimentary limitation [limitation of its causality] in a thing is the result of the fact that what it is is other than the act whereby it exists. Here, there are two principles in the thing, inseparable yet actually diverse, the one being potential in relation to the other, potential in the sense that a nature or an essence considered in itself is nothing actual but only a principle receptive of actualization. In the philosophy of St. Thomas, receptivity to existence is the basic metaphysical potentiality, underlying all potentiality for change or becoming. It is the radical receptivity that is the principle of limitation of finiteness, in things.<sup>39</sup>

Perhaps M. Van Steenberghen's difficulty with potentiality arises from his very notion of being. At times he seems almost to lose his appreciation of the analogical use of the term.<sup>40</sup> His is a static notion while Fr. Smith conceives it as a subject that is "ising" or in act, and Dr. Anderson sees *esse* (to be) and *agere* (to act) as both acts, the second flowing from the first. In M. Van Steenberghen's view "the constitutive principles constituting the subject seem rather disjoined from the principles accounting for the subject's activity. Activity, analogously considered, doesn't seem to be as universal as being because the secondary order of *agere* doesn't seem clearly to be an outcome of the dynamic act of existence.

Fr. Smith says, "Defective eyes (structure) . . . causes squinting (activity)"; and M. Van Steenberghen remarks, "The structures of which the author speaks belong also to the order of action,

<sup>38</sup> *Ontology*, p. 113.

<sup>39</sup> *Cause of Being*, p. 23.

<sup>40</sup> *Ontology*, pp. 181-82.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 127-28.

not that of being." <sup>42</sup> Certainly it is a very complicated point which is not perfectly clear in this sentence, but what is clear is that activity, as Dr. Anderson says, is "the communication of existence in some mode"—and the communication will not be perfect where there is potentiality or privation at any level. The *agere*, though accidental, results from the power of the formal structure. And what Fr. Smith and Dr. Anderson wish to stress is this close connection of *esse* and *agere*. But that does not confound substance and accident. Dr. Anderson says:

Existence (*esse*) and acting (*agere*) are correlatives, so to speak both are acts, the second follows the first. It belongs to an act by its very nature to communicate itself so far as it can. Therefore every agent acts so far as it exists in act. For to act is nothing else than to communicate that by which the agent is in act so far as it is possible. <sup>43</sup>

Here the fundamental dynamic aspect is the act of existence; activity is only its manifestation. For M. Van Steenberghen being is static.

Dr. Anderson's book is a clear elucidation of the notion of being as meaning, to be actual, to be existent. The cause of being or the "to be" is not the cause of why a thing is this or that but why it is at all. It is the notion of cause in a far wider sense than we usually take it, and the cause as the Cause of existence must be Existence Itself, Pure Act which would also be Pure Activity. This Existent is not seen as a necessary, unconditioned totality; nor just the necessary condition of what is relative. It is seen as unique Existence and yet as necessary for all that is and that yet is not its own existence. This is to be necessary in a vastly different way than is connoted in the non-relative or absolute of M. Van Steenberghen; it makes other beings necessarily to be what they are, in the degree that they are, although they can never of themselves exist. One might say they are not utterly relative; they are not pure fact; they are made to be beings but yet they are utterly contingent because they must be maintained to be what they are. As Fr. Smith says,

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<sup>42</sup> Van Steenberghen, "The Man," *Scholasticism Review* (Jan., 1953), p. 127.

<sup>43</sup> *Cause of Being*, p. 37.

If creation be a gift, it is not a gift made to us; we are the gift. If God causes us to act, He does not do so by way of "moving in" by way of pulling strings. He so causes us to act that we do the job.<sup>44</sup>

The work of Fr. Esser, while it is of Thomistic inspiration, belongs to the Suarezian school. The material object of metaphysics, for him, is *res realis* or real being. Negatively, the real is what is not logical or a being of reason. And it is real being inasmuch as it is being; as it is in itself.<sup>45</sup> But real being, from the point of view of being, does not present a formal object with a univocal unity; being is said analogically of substance and accidents. The formal object should have this univocal unity, one that is considered as intrinsically one. Thus, real being must be considered as real substance, that is, any substance whatsoever inasmuch as existence belongs to it. (The notion of substance is evidently considered univocal.)

Itaque substantia est objectum primum metaphysicae, accidens objectum secundarium.

... objectum formale metaphysicae est substantia realis sive praecieve sive positive immaterialis, prout ipsa est ens, considerata primario in seipsa et secundario in suis notis accidentalibus.<sup>46</sup>

It seems all the multiplicity of what exists is reduced to the unity of the formal object which is real substance. This notion of real substance is generated from a privileged experience which is not the experience of the existence of sensible, mobile things, for we know the existence of these things, not immediately, but only mediately. There are beings, however, whose existence we experience in their own proper reality. They are the I and psychical processes occurring in our own minds. The I in its act of seeing, feeling, etc. is apprehended immediately in its own entity. This I, as conscious here and now of acting, is immediately evident to the knower. However this does not give a soul distinct from the body; it gives the I as *ens existens*.

Fr. Esser's position seems to imply that all things known through perception may be merely phenomena or appearance. It is apparently only in the lived act of perception by the I that one

<sup>44</sup> *Natural Theol.*, p. 225.

<sup>45</sup> *Metaphysica Generalis*, p. 2.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 4, 5.

seizes a real, really existing. And from the real really existing substance one abstracts, from one's own existence, act or existence which is the form of essence. This he calls a formal abstraction of existence apart from the constitutive and individual notes of one's being or one's self. Moreover though my being is not a necessary being, yet the act of judgment, as universal and necessary is absolute. So the object of metaphysics is said to be absolute.

Beyond this notion of being there are in one's consciousness other notions, such as "to fear," "to abstract"; although they are not in act they mean something, and so merit the name "being." This also could be said of such virtues as justice or patience, or of a notion such as cause and effect or relation. The "ratio" by which they are able to exist is made up of a certain combination of notes, called *essentia* or *esse quidditativum*. Such beings are absolute because they do not depend on the act of knowing. The judgment, "justice is a virtue," exhibits the *esse quidditativum* of the notion of justice. Here the notion of being stresses primarily what exists, gathered from the I as existing, and secondarily the grades of being, as *esse quidditativum*. So when Fr. Esser states that being signifies existence he seems to point not directly to existence but to that which is capable of existence: ". . . ens ut sic est id, cui competit esse."<sup>47</sup>

Thus *ens* (being) tends to be *esse quidditativum* (essence). It seems that it is because the notion takes on this meaning of ratio or quiddity that he can pose the paradox: ". . . the ratio or very meaning of being, in as much as it is being, as such, does not exist; . . . tamen ipso ratio entis, in quantum est ens, ut talis non existit."<sup>48</sup> In other words the notion as notion exists only in the mind. Yet although he rightly denies its own proper actual existence he continues to insist on its *esse quidditativum* by saying that even though it does not so exist it is not non-objective, for its foundation is something immediately perceived by us. And this being as being or this intelligibility is absolute. The particular participates in it.

The difficulties of this position are many. It begins by abstracting existence which must also be substance which exists.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 26.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., p. 28.

On the other hand things that do not exist but have a meaning such as virtue, etc. are not nothing and must be included in the notion of being. But how are these included in the formal object since these notions are not necessarily substance? Furthermore the "quidditative esse" is considered as a comprehension of notes in an abstract fashion of an essence without that essence being any specific sort of essence.

... notio essentiae formatur, cum notae rei particularis omittuntur, entitas rei separatim a suis notis individuus consideratur et quid res sit attenditur.<sup>49</sup>

Fr. Esser seemingly sees no difficulty in so abstracting essence; he sees essence of that which is most common as the note by which a thing is that which is "res est id, quod est." It is spoken of as a note or root which constitutes a thing. But is there that in a thing which constitutes it a nature as nature above and beyond what constitutes it a certain type of nature? Besides, if existence is considered as the act of essence it must be considered as the actuality of some sort of thing; it cannot be considered as co-principle of a nature that is of no kind. No being can be a being without being pure act or being composed through co-principles. But these principles are each according to the mode of the being in question. It is impossible to abstract *esse essentiam* or *existentiam* as such. St. Thomas makes it very clear in his Commentary on the *De Trinitate* that, for him, it is impossible that one can abstract principles that include each other as do essence and existence, matter and form, and substance and accident. One of them is not intelligible without the other, yet one does not judge one principle to be the other principle, or judge them to be pure identity.

I have discussed these four books by trying to make clear the fundamental notion of being from which they develop. There is much else in these books, but none of the other questions is independent of this fundamental notion. M. Van Steenberghen and Fr. Smith cover much the same ground concerning the attributes of God, Creation, and God's relations to His creatures. It would be interesting to compare M. Van Steenberghen's position

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p. 87.

with that of Fr. Smith and Dr. Anderson on the notion and possibility of God's Infinity. Also in a secondary fashion Fr. Smith and M. Van Steenberghen both have insights that would be of importance in a critique of the sciences. Fr. Smith especially makes a number of remarks concerning mathematics that would be basic to a critique of that science. Fr. Esser develops the modes of being; transcendental attributes and predicamental being. Dr. Anderson presents a masterly discussion of the problem of creation and time with its difficulties of the actual and potential infinite as well as a clear exposition of the ubiquity of God and finality. But as the aim of the paper was to analyse the fundamental notion of being, I will not consider these further complications. The translation of M. Van Steenberghen's *Ontology* by Fr. Flynn makes it a very readable book.

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## THINKING AND EXPERIENCE

RICHARD B. BRANDT

PROFESSOR Price's volume is an excellent discussion of the problem, What is thinking?<sup>1</sup> His topic leads him over the territory of meaning, communication, verbal and image thinking, and—since he uses "thinking" to include any awareness of the absent—recognition, and awareness of something by means of signs of all kinds.

The book is philosophical psychology somewhat after the manner of Hume. It contains much helpful phenomenology of thinking, analysis, definitions of basic concepts, the outlines of a theory, and an account of how thinking so conceived can be knowledge. Again like Hume, Price aims to provide an empiricist account, that is, one the basic concepts in which can be "cashed" in terms of experience. Those interested in the problem of intentionality, in particular, should read the book.

I shall sketch and comment upon the main thread of the argument.

I. UNIVERSALS. We can hardly have a sophisticated theory of conceptual cognition without a theory of the ontological structure which is the topic of thought. So Price begins with a discussion of the traditional problem of universals. He confines himself to two theories, the *Universalia in rebus* theory, and the Resemblance theory. The Universal Theory holds that a further unanalyzable feature of the world is the fact that different things or events have qualities or relations in common, so that language properly applies the same adjective to different things (e.g., "X, Y, and Z are all red"). Price thinks that this and other basic concepts of the theory can be made clear enough by examples. And, in case the theory is careful to avoid reifications (e.g., about the

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<sup>1</sup> H. H. Price, *Thinking and Experience* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1953).

sense in which the *same* quality is *in* various individuals, or in which individuals *share a common* characteristic), and is developed so as to admit different orders of universals (Universal being of a higher order than Red) and to distinguish between determinate and determinable characteristics, Price considers that the theory is not shaken by any of the objections philosophers have raised. The Resemblance Theory may be construed as the theory that the similarity of events is an unanalyzable feature of the world; and that the concepts of the Universal theory can be analyzed in terms of resemblance. Price believes that this theory too, when properly stated, is not open to the standard criticisms: that the theory is bound to admit one universal, Resemblance, and that it is bound to talk of events resembling each other in respect of some universal. He concludes (thereby differing from his 1946 Hertz lecture) that "there is nothing to choose" between the doctrines as ontological theories, that they "cover the same facts," and hence perhaps they can be regarded as "two different . . . terminologies, two systematically different ways of saying the same thing" (p. 30). It later develops that Price rather prefers the Resemblance Theory because it is apt to be less misleading in epistemology.

In his later discussions Price usually keeps both theories in mind; but this last suggestion about the theories being different terminologies, reminiscent of proposals about the sense datum theory and the appearing theory, may well give us pause. At least if the theories are construed as having conflicting views about the analysis of "having the same characteristic" (etc.), it is not easy to see how both can be right.

II. RECOGNITION. We can benefit from past experience only if we can recognize new instances of experienced kinds; nor do we have a *concept* of a kind unless we can recognize instances of it. Hence Price regards the recognition of characteristics (not individuals) as the fundamental intellectual process, and begins his philosophical psychology with an analysis of it. He shows that it is independent of *words*.

*Primary* recognition of an instance as belonging to a class K

may occur only if I am observing directly the thing's having all the properties defining membership in K. The recognition is *secondary* if I am observing fewer properties of the thing than this. Thus recognizing an instance of (phenomenal) blackness is primary; recognition of a black something as a raven is secondary. (The distinction, he holds, does not commit one to the sense-datum theory; for the appearing theory must make the same distinction.) In secondary recognition, all the properties defining the class are in a sense before the mind, but only a few are observed; the unobserved ones are before the mind as the significates of the observed qualities here acting as signs. It is hence a case of *sign-cognition*, a process to be discussed below. (On most theories of perception, any recognition of a *physical* thing or property is inevitably secondary.) Secondary recognition, then, is "by means of signs" (p. 46), although the whole is before the mind *all at once*, the observed elements not being temporally prior.

But what is *recognition* in general? In the case of primary recognition it has two elements: noticing something, and finding it familiar. (Perhaps secondary recognition differs only in the "attribution" of unobserved properties; but there is obscurity here.) The familiarity experience involves memory or retentiveness; and it results from the arousal of a "totalistic" trace left by experiences with similar objects. It is also judgmental; and protocol language "This is red" is very close to an expression in words of primary recognition (when I am recognizing something like red). But notice that what is judged, is exceedingly restricted. It is not even a judgment (to put it into words) like "There has been something like this [red] before"; for there could be valid recognition even if I had been created ten seconds ago, provided I were created equipped with concepts. The claim of recognition is rather like "I have memory-exemplars like this [red]." Or "I have a concept of which this [red] is an example." Hence Price holds that primary recognition is non-fallible, because, as I understand him, the familiarity-experience just is a manifestation of such memory-exemplars. Its very occurrence is by definition sufficient evidence that there are some. Secondary recognition, of course, is fallible, since signs can mislead.

III. SIGN COGNITION. We have seen that in secondary recognition the observing of something somehow brings something unobserved before the mind. This general process is roughly what Price calls sign cognition. It is important for his purposes, because awareness through linguistic symbols (or images) may be considered a case of it. A simple example is the observing of lightning making us expect thunder.

Sign cognition should really be regarded as a form of thought. For it is fallible: I expect to hear thunder, but perhaps the lightning was far away, and I hear none. Again, it is cognition in absence. And it is general or abstract: I expect a noise of a certain *general* sort; it may be either loud or low, a clap or a lengthy rumbling. But it differs from thought in being tied to observation. Yet the bond may be weak. For some sign-cognition is long-range, as when the look of the clouds makes us expect rain in a day or two. And some signs signify only weakly; and in some contexts signs may arouse conflicting expectations.

The important question for philosophical psychology, I believe, is in what *sense* the signified entity is brought before the mind in sign-cognition. Price offers many examples: tense expectation (e.g., of thunder), quasi-sensible vividness (when "one sees the trigger-movement as bang-producing"), or present control of reactions (as when the sound of a bark sends a cat up a tree). What have all these in common? Price's answer is that there is *sub-activation* of the capacity to recognize the thing, a state short of actual recognition of an observed instance. "Thus the capacity for recognizing rain is sub-activated when one sees a man carrying a folded-up umbrella . . ." (p. 115). But what is the meaning of "sub-activation"? We can understand this if we fall back on physiological notions, holding, like D. O. Hebb, that sub-activation is a low degree of arousal of the same brain-circuit that is fully aroused by the perception of the signified object. Price hardly means this. Perhaps I am *ready* to observe a certain object, in the sense that the merest glimpse would enable me to recognize it—a possibility that work with the tachistoscope suggests has promise. Or perhaps, in a state of subactivation, I shall have a more pronounced familiarity-experience if I see the object.

Or, as O. H. Mowrer proposed for "expectation," perhaps I shall react more speedily to an observation of such an object. Maybe Price could define it in terms of its *symptoms*: in the case of rain, the production of words, of rain-like images, the noticing of further weather signs, actions or incipient actions such as "fingering my umbrella," and so on (pp. 118-19). But he would clearly want to say the subactivation could be in force although none of these symptoms actually occurred. I do not find Price's discussion here satisfactory; nor do I find the clarification that we should like of the relations between being-reminded, expectation, and belief. Furthermore, since sign cognition apparently is not a temporal process—the sign not necessarily being cognized *before* the thing signified—one would like to know more about the sense in which the sign can be regarded as a causal factor. This difficulty again suggests that neurological notions may be inevitable. (This problem arises especially in connection with the relation between the observed and the "attributed" properties brought before the mind, in sense perception.) We shall come back to the notion of subactivation at the end, in the course of discussing Price's conception of a Concept.

Price gives an interesting and subtle account of how analogues of the logical constants are present in sign-cognition on the pre-verbal level; but I shall have to pass over this.

IV. THE INDUCTIVE SIGN THEORY OF SYMBOLS. Price next considers two theories of symbols: the Inductive Sign Theory, and the Image Theory. He uses "symbol" to cover not only words but gestures, diagrams, pictures and images; and he is looking for a satisfactory theory for all these types of symbol.

He begins with the former of these, which he attributes to L. S. Stebbing, and to Ogden and Richards. Unfortunately his statement of the theory is not very explicit. But I believe that, at least roughly, what this theory is supposed to assert is that something S is a symbol, for a person, of another thing Z, if and only if S is, for that person, a *sign* of Z (in the sense discussed above), and is so for that person because of previous experiences in which S occurred in reliable correlation with things of the kind Z.

I cannot help thinking that this theory is something of a

straw man, as compared with some detailed behavioristic theories of linguistic behavior (especially B. F. Skinner's 1948 William James Lectures, unfortunately still available only in mimeographed form under the title *Verbal Behavior*). Some of these theories work out a detailed view of the effect of language on auditors, of speech production, of the learning of vocabulary and grammar, and, most important, of the use of verbal symbolism in productive thought. Price's discussion therefore seems to me of only limited interest, and I shall mention only the major criticisms he raises.

(a) Price first inquires whether this theory can explain how individual words, as distinct from whole sentences, can have meaning; or how logical words and statements can have meaning. But he thinks the theory can take care of these problems. In particular, logical statements need not be regarded as having meaning in the sense in which empirical statements have it. Human beings are calculators, and logical statements can be viewed as "just part of the machinery of the linguistic calculus itself" (p. 196). (b) The theory is limited to the auditor's point of view; it ignores the production of symbols and their use in thinking. (Behavioristic theories do make a stab at solving these problems; Price does not tell us why they cannot succeed.) (c) *Images* often serve as symbols in thinking, but we cannot interpret these according to the Inductive Sign Theory, which is essentially a theory of public symbols. This is correct. And for this reason, among others, that theory is inadequate as a *general* theory of symbols. (d) Price argues that the theory is circular, because we can understand statements without believing them; indeed, the capacity of statements to be understood is "logically prior to their belief-arousing function" (p. 206). He makes the further point (pp. 201 and 203) that one can understand one's own statements even when hearing them does not cause one to believe anything, i.e., when they do not affect one after the sign-cognition pattern. But I am not sure that the Theory is shattered by these points. What is this "understanding"? Must the Theory deny that people have a capacity to put their statements into other words, or to produce an image of what it would be like for the statement to be true, or in some sense know what behavior is

called for, if the statement is true? If it need not deny these things, I am not sure what observable fact there is which the Theory is supposed unable to accept. But he is right in that the Theory is unacceptable as a *general* theory of symbols.

But Price thinks one contention of the Theory is true and very important: that S becomes a verbal symbol of Z through experience in which sign and significate are correlated, so that an associative connection gets formed. Taken as a general proposition about *all* linguistic signs Price thinks this is an oversimplification. But as a thesis about the learning of basic observation predicates, it is true and highly important (although he believes some elaborations of some current theories of ostensive definition are in order). Why? Because the association of verbal symbols with Universals (or groups of exemplars, on the Resemblance Theory), through experience, provides a tie between verbal symbols and the world. And it is this tie that enables us to think reliably about the world when we think with verbal symbols.

V. THE IMAGE THEORY. Price then considers, as a supplement to the foregoing theory, what can be said for the Berkeley-Hume view that the symbols used in thinking are images which symbolize because they resemble what they signify. In contrast to what is often urged in England today, he urges that there really are occurrents which are images, and that we do make use of them in thinking. Moreover, he agrees with Berkeley and Hume that we can use them reliably in thinking, because they resemble what they symbolize. Further, he points out that if we are in doubt whether we know what we mean by a verbal statement, one way in which we can properly settle the matter is by producing an image of what it would be like for the sentence to be true. (We can do the same thing with models and diagrams; but that is no matter.) There are, of course, objections; for instance, we must explain how an image can represent one particular thing when it resembles many things. But he suggests how these objections can be met.

Price thinks that where the Image Theory goes wrong is in making exclusive claims. It is actually not nearly a complete

theory of the use of symbols—is not really a theory of *communication* at all. Moreover, verbal thinking, tied to reality by ostensive definitions, is every bit as reliable as image thinking. And the image theory has nothing satisfactory to say about logical concepts and logical truths.

VI. THE CLASSICAL THEORY OF THINKING. Having discussed these theories of symbols, Price then raises a question about the adequacy of what he calls the Symbolistic Theory of thinking: the theory that all mature thinking is essentially just the production and manipulation of symbols. Price begins by discussing the opposed, Classical Theory.

The Classical Theory holds that symbols are not *necessary* for thought, and that their function is the relatively minor one of directing attention to something else. Thinking, according to it, is essentially the *inspection* of a special sort of object: a Universal (Realists) or a Concept (Conceptualists). This theory has often been common ground for the Universal and Resemblance Theories.

Why have philosophers been attracted by this theory? Primarily for an epistemological reason: they have wanted a theory which justifies believing thought is in reliable touch with reality. Not believing that resemblance or ostensive definition is a sufficient tie to reality to justify reliance on symbolic thinking, they have been inclined to assert some sort of inspection. But there are also other attractions in the theory. For sometimes the symbols used in thinking are very scrappy—and most so precisely in productive thinking. And sometimes we have an idea in mind which we are not yet able to symbolize. If there were not more in thinking than symbol-production, what guides our search for the right symbol? Again, the framing of a piece of discourse seems to be guided by a sense of the general drift of the argument; and this is not just the awareness of symbols.

These are all serious considerations. But, Price asks, is the Classical Theory necessary to take care of them? Or does it even help? What is this inspecting of a Universal in the absence of an instance? Does not this notion commit us to an *ante rem* theory after all? (p. 326) Or again, what is this inspecting of an

occurrent abstract concept? A survey of his own mental furniture convinces Price that this description is most nearly satisfied just by the generic image—and that these are not always present where there is thinking.

Price then presents an alternative to the Classical and Symbolist theories. (Notice that we could, if we wanted, keep the *language* of the Classical Theory, as Price suggests for talk of inspecting concepts (p. 303). We can say: "We can think of universals themselves, not just representatives of them." And we can regard Price's theory as an *analysis* of such language.) It is important to see what kind of theory he is offering. Price thinks any good theory must (a) recognize that the central or perhaps only conscious events during thinking are symbols of one kind or another, (b) explain how thinking is usually reliable, in contact with the real, and (c) explain phenomenological facts like those cited above. His "theory" seems to be the proposal of a set of concepts and an abstract theoretical framework within which more precise psychological theories could fit. (His analysis seems to fit only empirical concepts. He does not discuss theoretical concepts—e.g., electrons—an important problem especially if physical object language cannot be translated into phenomenal language. Nor does he discuss logical concepts further. Any *a priori* concepts would be a real difficulty; but I think Price is not worried about this possibility.)

What are the main outlines of Price's theory? (A) First there are *concepts*—not in the Lockean sense, not occurrent inspectibles—but as dispositions to behave in various ways. (B) Then there is the *sub-activation* of concepts, a partial arousal of them—a notion to which we must return. (C) Price then proposes that words, images, and other symbols are connected with concepts. Thus when we hear the word "cat" our concept of Cat is sub-activated. (D) Moreover, concepts are connected with one another, owing to past experience; so that the partial activation of the concept Cat will sub-activate other concepts as well: Bowls of Milk, Mice, etc. Hence, hearing "cat" will sub-activate not only the concept Cat, but others as well; and in this sense a symbol can "carry" a large number of concepts. (There is experimental evidence for this in the psychological

literature.) Price thinks this notion *explains* how we can think with only scrappy symbols, keep the thread throughout a long discourse, think of something without having a word for it, etc. (p. 319).

This essentially Humean theory avoids talk of inspecting universals or concepts. It can admit that in much thinking *nothing* is present to consciousness beyond the symbols. But neither is it the same as the Symbolistic Theory. For there is more to thinking than just the production and manipulation of symbols. There are also concepts—guiding the course of symbol-production and behavior. These guiding concepts are present *in* the mind but not *to* the mind. Accordingly, Price calls his view “a *dispositional* version of Conceptualism” (p. 353).

Let us try to get clearer this dispositional notion of a concept. Let us ask what meaning Price would assign to the statement, “Mr. X has the concept Cat.” Price would answer by saying it means that Mr. X can *do* all the things a person can do when he is ordinarily said to have the concept. Thus a person has the concept of Cat if he is capable of expecting cat-appearances and recognizing them, of behaving in ways appropriate to cats in various circumstances, of producing an image of a cat and noticing what is wrong with or lacking in it, of drawing one, or acting like one (mewing), of producing intelligible sentences about cats and putting them into other words, and so on. Thus, to say “Mr. X has the concept Cat,” is to say, “If Mr. X were to see a cat, he would recognize it as one . . .” and so on. These capacities are connected, although as yet we do not know how. But he says, “the recognition of instances is the primary and fundamental way in which a concept is manifested, and all the other manifestations it has . . . are dependent upon this one” (p. 355).

I believe Price's general proposal is on essentially the right lines, and an improvement over both the Classical and Symbolistic theories. But there are also difficulties, especially in the notion of sub-activation, some problems about which we discussed above.

Price's most explicit illustration of this notion is as follows:

. . . then certainly my concept or abstract idea of Wolf was subacti-

vated by my hearing of what my companion said ("Wolf"). It manifested itself occurrently by means of a sub-vocal word, by the production of a wolf-like image, whether a generic image or not, and by putting me into a state of readiness for the presence of an actual wolf. This readiness, we may notice, was not merely psychical but psycho-physical, as the accompanying organic sensations showed. I was also made ready for further wolf-mentioning discourse on my companion's part, and ready to initiate such discourse myself, either aloud or privately in the form of further sub-vocal words or verbal imagery (p. 332).

But is it the case that *all* the various activities referred to above have to be aroused if the concept Cat is to be sub-activated? No, certainly not all—since all of them hardly could occur at once. (And in any case, *several* concepts can be sub-activated at the same time.) And what is this *readiness* to do various things? We have already looked at some difficulties in the notion of readiness to observe or recognize something. Again, suppose I am reading a book. Price thinks my concepts are continually sub-activated; that is why I get so excited when I read that the villain is pointing a pistol at the hero. But am I really more ready to recognize or observe a pistol? Or do I find myself getting ready to duck? Remember that Price himself, when criticizing the Inductive Sign Theory, emphasized the difference between understanding and believing. Well, we might ask for more information about the difference between the understanding kind of sub-activation and the believing kind. Am I really *expecting* something when I read a novel? I have an uneasy feeling that to say a concept is sub-activated is only to say that it is more than normally *probable* that there will occur those specific events in terms of a capacity to produce, by which "having the concept" is defined (and also, to a lesser extent, for associated concepts). But if so, I am not sure that the concept of sub-activation is useful in explaining facts like our capacity to think with only scrappy symbols before us (and so on; see above) in any other than a verbal sense. Very possibly, in order to remedy these difficulties, we shall need to introduce "concept" and "sub-activate" not as dispositional terms but as theoretical constructs, perhaps drawing on concepts in brain-physiology, like those used in the theories of Hebb or the Gestaltists.

I have had to pass by the many interesting things Price says

about numerous topics such as ostensive definition, "natural" signs, the problem of other minds, and private language. But I hope it is clear by now that the reader of Price's book will be richly rewarded.

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## BRAITHWAITE ON SCIENTIFIC METHOD

ABNER SHIMONY

### 1. The design of Professor Braithwaite's *Scientific Explanation*<sup>1</sup> is best summarized by his own statement:

I have tried to bridge the gap between the awareness of all educated persons of the general way in which science proceeds (by the hypothetico-deductive method) and their vagueness or puzzlement about such scientific fundamentals as the function of mathematics in science, the nature of theoretical concepts and the principles of statistical inference by examining in great detail simple examples specially constructed to display, without irrelevances, the logically important features (p. xi).

This book is concerned with the structure of scientific theory rather than with the content of science, and it conceives of structural problems quite abstractly. There is no more than passing reference, for instance, to the status of space and time, to the nature of such basic elements in our physical picture of the world as matter and energy, to the epistemological problems of using subjective faculties to construct an objective science, or even to such methodological questions as measurement, analogy and simplicity. These limitations of scope are justified by the importance of the problems which the author does treat and by the fact that his treatment of them is systematic and self-contained. Certain virtues are especially appropriate, however, to a treatise of limited scope, in particular precision of analysis and a kind of intensity of insight. *Scientific Explanation* satisfies these criteria only partially. There are instances of insight and originality in exhibiting the potential richness of the hypothetico-deductive method, for example, that it can accommodate teleological explanation and incorporate contemporary statistical procedures. However, the original insights are generally stated only programmatically, and there is strong doubt (especially in regard to the author's theory of probability) whether the program can

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<sup>1</sup> (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1953.)

be completed. Furthermore, the parts which are expositions of current ideas throw little new light on these ideas. The trouble here may lie in Professor Braithwaite's program of illustrating current ideas with excessively simple examples, which fail to stimulate subtlety and sometimes disguise the difficulty of problems. The exposition of *Scientific Explanation* is generally clear and unambiguous, but its precision is weakened by a serious inversion: the most meticulous analyses and deductions are reserved for non-controversial matters, whereas crucial points in the original contribution are presented informally. For example, the explication of statistical hypotheses, which is one of Professor Braithwaite's most original and central ideas, suffers from lacunae which prevent the derivation of the theorem in which he is most interested. This inversion may be indicative of a tension between the author's professed desire to educate a technically untrained audience and the stringencies of reporting original investigations on technical matters. Even the most expert expositor must find it difficult to reconcile these two purposes.

2. "The first four chapters of this book are devoted to explaining the parts played by mathematical reasoning and by theoretical concepts and 'models' in the organization of a scientific theory" (p. ix). In short, this part of *Scientific Explanation* attempts to show how a modern empiricist can recognize the role of reason in science. The main theses in these chapters are as follows:

I. The propositions of a scientific system are generalizations of unrestricted range in space and time (in Chapter V the author relaxes this restriction so that scientific systems may include statistical hypotheses). These propositions are arranged in levels such that (a) the propositions of any level but the highest are logically deducible from a set of propositions of higher level, and (b) the propositions of the lowest level are expressible by sentences of the form "Everything which is B is also A," where A and B are observable properties.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> "Observable" is to be understood common-sensically, rather than phenomenally. Thus, not only the property of being a brown patch,

II. The essential role of mathematics is to deduce contingent propositions of lower levels from contingent propositions of higher levels. The independence of these mathematical operations from the empirical content of the scientific system is shown by the fact that a corresponding set of deductions may be made in an uninterpreted calculus suitably chosen to represent the system.

III. A consideration of calculi is indispensable for understanding the status of theoretical terms, such as "electron" and "electric field." Professor Braithwaite examines and rejects the constructivistic thesis of Mach and Russell that such terms can be defined explicitly as designating certain combinations of observables. Instead, the author proposes that a formal calculus be taken as a *whole* to represent a scientific system. Some of the low-level formulae of the calculus are then given direct empirical interpretation (e.g., by interpreting the predicate symbols of those formulae as designating observable properties), and certain symbols of the calculus are interpreted as designating logical and mathematical concepts; but no rules of interpretation other than these are specified. The high-level formulae which involve theoretical terms are thereby assigned meaning indirectly, by virtue of the fact that various conjunctions of them logically imply the low-level and directly meaningful formulae. The meaning of a theoretical term is specified by its mode of occurrence in high-level formulae.

IV. The use of a model may be heuristically valuable in working with a theory, but except for identity of formal structure, the model is in no way constitutive of the theory.

These ideas are familiar,<sup>3</sup> and only a few special comments are required:

(a) In these chapters the author admits into a scientific system only propositions expressible by such sentences as "All B

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but also the property of being a bear, is considered by Professor Braithwaite to be observable (pp. 3-4).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Carnap's monograph *Foundations of Logic and Mathematics* in the *International Encyclopedia of Unified Science*, which also stresses syntactical and semantical concepts in its treatment of the hypothetico-deductive method.

is A." Many scientific hypotheses, however, some of very "high level," are not expressible in this way; for example, the important hypothesis that there exists a maximum velocity for the transmission of physical signals is existential in form. (Existential hypotheses are excluded even in Chapter V, where statistical hypotheses are admitted into scientific systems.) This would be a minor defect, justified perhaps for pedagogical reasons, were it not that Professor Braithwaite uses the mode of assigning meaning to a generalization as a guide to his later discussion of assigning meaning to statistical hypotheses (pp. 152-154). A peculiarity of generalizations is their refutability by a single counter-instance; and indeed the meaning of "All B is A" is accurately specified by stating that it is the proposition of minimum strength which is refuted by finding an entity with the property B but not the property A. In the author's terminology, the meaning of a universal generalization is specified by a *rule of rejection*. He proposes, in a manner to be described in the next section, an analogous rule of rejection for probability hypotheses, and maintains that thereby an adequate explication of probability is given. It will be seen that this treatment of probability leads to great difficulties. Had the author considered more seriously the role in science of existential hypotheses, which cannot be refuted by any finite body of observations, he might not have relied so heavily on the rejection rule in his discussion of probability.

(b) It is generally acknowledged that the use of calculi, as described in III, for assigning indirect meaning to theoretical terms and to statements containing them is a powerful intellectual instrument in science. Professor Braithwaite, however, seems to assert more than this: namely, (i) that *in principle* the meanings of statements involving theoretical terms cannot be specified without reference to the structure of the calculus whereby these higher level formulae are linked to the formulae of lowest level (see p. 87), and (ii) that the ontological status of a theoretical concept is *completely* specified by the role of the term designating it within the calculus (see p. 82).

An alternative to (i) is to consider a calculus in which the only interpreted formulae are those of lowest level as an enormous equation, in which the empirical content of the highest level formu-

lae is the "unknown." It may be possible to "solve" this semantical equation and to express the meaning of the highest level formulae directly in empirical terms. We would then have a new version of constructivism which would, I believe, make essential use of probable correlations between observations. The introduction of probability would impart to the constructs a flexibility which they do not have in Russell's and Mach's constructivism. The details of such a "probabilistic constructivism" have never been completely worked out, but some valuable contributions to such a program have been made in "A Calculus for Empirical Classes," *Methodos* (1951), by Kaplan and Schott.

Professor Braithwaite's thesis (ii) evades the problem of how theoretical terms can designate entities independent of our experience, and *a fortiori* independent of their being expressed in a language. An alternative is to acknowledge a vague but direct experience of the external world. This is the sort of experience which Whitehead calls "perception in the mode of causal efficacy" (*Process and Reality*, pp. 255-79) and which Locke recognizes when he discusses "sensitive knowledge of the particular existence of finite beings without us" (*Essay on Human Understanding*, Bk. IV, III). A scientific theory does not involve perceptions in the mode of causal efficacy, for the only sentences in the theory which are directly interpreted make no reference to this type of experience. Consequently, the only ways in which the scientific theory can specify the ontological status of theoretical concepts are, first, to assign certain formal characteristics to these concepts, and, secondly, to relate them indirectly to ordinary observations. However, it is plausible that the success of certain scientific theories in making far-reaching predictions is indicative of some sort of correspondence between the structure of the scientific theory and the structure of the real world. It is probably too optimistic to hope that this correspondence is a close approximation to isomorphism. Furthermore, because of the vagueness of our perception in the mode of causal efficacy, there is no direct way of ascertaining the closeness of this correspondance. Nevertheless, even vague perceptions in this mode make it meaningful to speak of a possible correspondence between the structure of the theory and the structure of the external world; and this possibility gives an ontological

status to theoretical concepts over and above the status conferred on them by the syntactical and semantical rules of the scientific theory.

3. Chapters V, VI and VII attempt to explicate<sup>4</sup> the concept of probability and to determine empirical tests for probability and statistical hypotheses.

Professor Braithwaite uses the term "probability" in such a way that "the probability that an entity having property B also has property A is  $p$ " is synonymous with "100  $p$  % of all B's are A's."<sup>5</sup> He recognizes that 'probability' is also used currently in a non-statistical sense, "where it is a whole scientific theory that is asserted to be probable, or to be more probable than another, and not an event to which the theory itself assigns a probability" (p. 179). To avoid equivocation, the author refers to the latter concept (which is roughly the same as Carnap's confirmation, Russell's credibility, and Kneale's acceptability) as 'reasonableness.'

The literal meaning of '100  $p$  % of all B's are A's' is 'the ratio of the number of those entities having the properties A and B to the number of those having the property B is  $p$ .' If A and B are observable properties and the B's constitute a finite but non-empty class, this ratio is evidently computable on the basis of a finite number of observations. Consequently, the empirical meaning of "100  $p$  % of all B's are A's" and hence of " $\text{Prob}(A, B) = p$ " is completely specified. This analysis is incomplete, however, because of two circumstances: (i) if the class of B's and also the class of things having both properties A and B are infinite, it is meaningless to speak of the ratio of the respective cardinal numbers of these classes, and (ii) in science we

<sup>4</sup> Explication is the process of replacing a vague but widely used concept, called the *explicandum*, by a similar concept which is exact, called the *explicatum*. (Cf. Carnap, *Logical Foundations of Probability*, [Chicago, 1950], chapter I.) In many ways explication corresponds to what is traditionally called "real definition."

<sup>5</sup> I shall use the following abbreviations: " $\text{Prob}(A, B) = p$ " for "The probability that an entity having the property B also has property A."

employ statements like "The probability that a radium atom will disintegrate within 1,700 years is  $1/2$ " and "50 % of all radium atoms disintegrate within 1,700 years," in which the class of A's and the class of B's may to our knowledge be either finite or infinite. In order that such sentences may be considered meaningful (or, more accurately, that their meaningfulness may not be a contingent matter), it is necessary to abandon the ordinary literal meaning of "100  $p$  % of all B's are A's."

This difficulty suggests that "100  $p$  % of all B's are A's" and "Prob (A, B) =  $p$ " be interpreted as asserting that the ratio of A's to B's in a sequence of classes of B's converges to the limit  $p$ . This explication, which has been proposed by Venn, von Mises and Reichenbach, has the advantage of not imposing a condition of finiteness on the classes concerned. Professor Braithwaite rejects this explication, however, because it presupposes a specific ordering of the reference class of B's, and, more important, because it precludes any empirical test of statistical and probability hypotheses (pp. 124-26).

Professor Braithwaite's method of explicating the concept of probability is perhaps best understood in the light of his second criticism of the limiting frequency interpretation. He is determined to explicate probability in such a way that hypotheses involving the explicatum will be capable of being tested by reference to ratios in observable classes. To achieve this he makes the following proposal:

'The probability of a member of  $\beta$  being a member of  $\alpha$  is  $p$ ,' where  $p$  denotes a proper fraction . . . is given a meaning by the following rule of rejection (to be called a *k*-rule-of-rejection): Choose any small positive number  $k$  (e.g.,  $1/20$ ). On the basis of a set of  $n$  observations of members of  $\beta$ , reject the hypothesis that the probability is  $p$  that a member of  $\beta$  is a member of  $\alpha$  if the  $\alpha$ -ratio in this set, of  $n$  observations (i.e., the number of members of  $\alpha$  in this set, divided by  $n$ ) is either less than  $p - \sqrt{(pq/nk)}$  or is greater than  $p + \sqrt{(pq/nk)}$ . [pp. 153-54, Professor Braithwaite here and elsewhere uses " $q$ " as an abbreviation for " $1 - p$ ".]

In other words, his basic proposal is to incorporate *within the explication itself* a method of testing probability statements by reference to observable classes. The fact that the explicatum

manifestly has empirical content seems to be adequate compensation, in the opinion of Professor Braithwaite, for the fact that the explicatum bears no intuitive resemblance to the explicandum. The author's proposal is bold and original, but it evidently raises the question of the adequacy of the explicatum to the crude notion of probability with which we began.

In order to judge the adequacy of Professor Braithwaite's explication, the following criteria seem appropriate.<sup>6</sup> (1) Is the explicatum similar to the explicandum, in the sense that when propositions involving the latter are intuitively judged to be true or false, then most of the corresponding propositions involving the former are judged to have the same truth value? (2) Are the rules specifying the explicatum consistent? (3) Is the explicatum a precise concept, in that the rules governing it suffice to determine how it should be used in all relevant circumstances? (4) Is the explicatum a fruitful concept?

There are several respects in which (1), the criterion of similarity, is violated. First, when the reference class  $\beta$  is finite, there are often discrepancies between the truth values of propositions involving the intuitive concept of statistical probability and the corresponding propositions involving Professor Braithwaite's explicatum. More important, however, is the fact that the intuitive concept of statistical probability is intended to satisfy the axioms and theorems of the classical mathematical theory of probability, whereas Professor Braithwaite's explicatum does not satisfy most of these.<sup>7</sup> One might suppose that this shows only the incompleteness of the explication and the need to supplement the rule of rejection by further rules. However, the trouble lies deeper, for it can be shown that if any rules are added whereby either the addition axiom or the multiplication axiom would be demonstrable, inconsistencies would result. Consequently, in order to avoid a violation of criterion (2), the explicatum must remain dissimilar to the explicandum in the important respect of

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Carnap, *Logical Foundations of Probability*, p. 7.

<sup>7</sup> In particular, it is not possible to prove the Bienaymé-Tchebichef Theorem on the basis of any of the author's formulations of the rejection rule, even though he considers this theorem to be central in justifying his explication (cf. p. 154).

not satisfying the classical axioms and theorems of probability theory.

Professor Braithwaite's explication also fails to satisfy criterion (3). The total meaning assigned by the author to the term "probability" is contained in the rejection rule; but the function of this rule is to determine only one pragmatic attitude towards probability hypotheses, and that one only in a limited range of circumstances. The rejection rule, says nothing, however, about the case in which the  $\alpha$ -ratio in the observed class falls *inside* the interval  $[p - \sqrt{pq/nk}, p + \sqrt{pq/nk}]$ . One might suppose that in this case, the rules governing the explicatum enjoin accepting and acting upon the hypothesis, or perhaps more subtly enjoin partial acceptance of it. However the author explicitly distinguishes failure to reject from acceptance (pp. 170-71), and hence the fact that the  $\alpha$ -ratio does fall within the interval  $[p - \sqrt{pq/nk}, p + \sqrt{pq/nk}]$  does not imply that it should be accepted. Furthermore, he thinks it unnecessary to discuss degrees of acceptance, since he claims that reasonable acceptance is an "all-or-nothing reaction" (p. 355). Nor does the rejection rule contain implicitly any recommendations about total or partial acceptance which Professor Braithwaite might have overlooked. Consequently, the rule governing the explicatum does not specify how it is to be used in all relevant circumstances, and hence it is not a precise concept.

Finally, there is no evidence that Professor Braithwaite's explication satisfies criterion (4), the criterion of fruitfulness. A natural way of exhibiting its fruitfulness would have been to devise a method of choosing among alternative statistical hypotheses by making essential use of the rule of rejection. However, even though the whole of Chapter VII is devoted to the problem of choosing among statistical hypotheses, Professor Braithwaite merely follows the "minimax policy" <sup>a</sup> proposed by A. Wald, and

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<sup>a</sup> The minimax policy prescribes choosing that hypothesis which, though it may lead to a loss, nevertheless involves a maximum possible loss which is less than the maximum possible loss involved in the choice of any alternative hypothesis. This policy, as both Professor Braithwaite and Wald recognize, emphasizes caution and prudence. It is advisable, perhaps, in many economic and military situations. However, it is reasonable as a general rule in scientific investigation only if Nature can be

he never relates his use of this policy to the explication of probability.

Thus, Professor Braithwaite's explication of probability is not adequate to the rough intuitive notion of statistical probability with which we began. More adequate explications, I believe, have been proposed by workers in statistical mechanics and ergodic theory.<sup>9</sup> Many of these proposals involve the concept of a system being "well-mixed," which Professor Braithwaite might find unsatisfactory because of the difficulty in providing empirical tests for whether a system is well-mixed. I believe this difficulty can be overcome, but only after the development of a logic of degrees of confirmation or degrees of reasonableness.<sup>10</sup>

4. In Chapter VIII of *Scientific Explanation* there is a discussion of the justification of induction which is interesting and intelligible apart from the rest of the book.

Professor Braithwaite states his theory of induction as an antithesis to the thesis that induction can be assimilated to deduction. He distinguishes and criticizes two kinds of assimilationism.

One is that of supposing that in every induction there is a suppressed major premiss, the explicit recognition of which will make the inference a deductive one. But no plausible major premiss can be proposed which would make the inductive conclusion a logical consequence of the premisses taken together. So a second way of assimilating has

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regarded as an opponent trying to out-manceuvre us in the game of knowledge. In the light of the history of science and of the apparent adaptability of human beings to their natural environment, it is unreasonable to accept this view of nature even as a metaphor (p. 210). Professor Braithwaite adds little to Wald's *Statistical Decision Functions* (New York, 1950), but he has performed an important service in calling Wald's work and the related work of von Neumann and Morgenstern to the attention of philosophers.

<sup>9</sup> To my knowledge, the best discussion of statistical probability which does not make the limiting frequency definition primary is E. Hopf's "On Causality, Statistics and Probability," *Journal of Mathematics and Physics* (1934). Popular expositions of similar ideas are given in D. Struik's "On the Foundation of the Theory of Probabilities," *Philosophy of Science* (1934), and H. Weyl's *Philosophy of Mathematics and Natural Science* (Princeton, 1949), pp. 194-203 and appendices B and C.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. E. C. Kemble, "The Probability Concept," *Philosophy of Science* (1941).

been tried—that of supposing that the conclusion of an induction is not the scientific hypothesis itself but is instead a proposition assigning a number to the hypothesis in relation to the evidence, this number measuring the ‘probability’ in the sense of Kneale’s acceptability or Carnap’s degree of confirmation; and that the argument thus understood is a deduction in a deductive system of probability statements in this sense of probability. It is the great merit of Keynes’s work to have shown conclusively that this second way of assimilating induction to deduction is not defensible unless it is combined with the first. A deductive system of probability statements will only give the probability of an inductive hypothesis on the basis of its confirmation in a set of instances . . . as an arithmetical product one of whose factors is its probability before it has been confronted with experience (its ‘prior probability’); and a supreme major premiss is necessary to ensure that this prior probability should be greater than zero . . . . But such a supreme major premiss, whether in Mill’s form of a principle of Uniformity of Nature or in Keynes’s form of a principle of Limited Independent Variety, will have to be a logically contingent proposition in order to fulfil the function which is required of it. That it is reasonable to believe such a proposition can then only be justified by an inductive inference (pp. 258-59).

I agree entirely with Professor Braithwaite’s criticism of the first variety of assimilationism. With regard to the second school, I agree that  $C(h, e)$ , the degree of confirmation of the inductive hypothesis  $h$  on evidence  $e$ , is in general computable only if  $e$  contains not only a report on particular empirical observations but also a contingent proposition of the order of strength and generality of the principles of Uniformity and Limited Variety.<sup>11</sup> I disagree, however, with the author’s conclusion that this is

<sup>11</sup> In Carnap’s theory of confirmation the value of  $C(h, e)$ , if the propositions  $h$  and  $e$  are designated by sentences within a certain kind of language, is indeed determined by logical deduction, but this is the case only because a particular explicatum of the concept of confirmation has been selected. The choice of an explicatum, however, is somewhat arbitrary, and indeed Carnap admits that contingent circumstances may supply the motive for the choice (cf. *The Continuum of Inductive Methods* [Chicago, 1952], p. 55). Consequently when Carnap recommends an evaluation of  $C(h, e)$  it is dubious that he avoids using some contingent proposition  $f$  as auxiliary to the overt evidence  $e$ . It should be noted that even after the assumption of a strong auxiliary proposition  $f$ , one still may not be able to deduce the value of  $C(h, e \text{ and } f)$  but may need to make some additional intuitive judgment (which is not necessarily subjective, however, simply because it is not classified under a general rule). Consequently, Professor Braithwaite’s statement that the confirmation logicians assimilate induction to deduction is misleading.

disastrous to the general program of the confirmation logicians. For even though there is clearly a circularity in basing induction upon a contingent proposition, the justification of which is inductive, it may be that the circle is not vicious.

Professor Braithwaite treats the problem of induction as a problem of finding a valid inductive principle of inference, rather than of finding a suppressed major premiss. An inductive principle of inference is a rule which can be used to derive contingent general propositions from finite bodies of empirical data, e.g., the principle of induction by simple enumeration and the eliminative methods of Bacon and Mill. The justification of a particular principle of inference is roughly, in Peirce's terminology, that it "must generally have led to true conclusion."<sup>12</sup> For various reasons the author refines and qualifies Peirce's criterion, and proposes that an inductive principle of inference is justified if the policy II of using the principle satisfies the following criterion (which he calls the criterion of *effectiveness*):

Of every time  $t$  later than a fixed time  $t_0$ , and of every interval of time of a fixed length of years  $d$  lying within the interval  $[t_0, t]$ , it is true that many of the hypotheses established by the use of the policy II during the interval of  $d$  years (unless there are no such hypotheses) have the joint property (1) of not having been empirically refuted at any time between the time of establishment and  $t$ , (2) of having been empirically confirmed at least once between the time of establishment and  $t$  (p. 267).

At this point Professor Braithwaite recognizes that his recommendation is threatened by circularity. *Prima facie* a necessary condition for a person B to be reasonable in his use of the inductive principle of inference is that B have a reasonable belief in  $v$ , where  $v$  is the proposition asserting the effectiveness of using the principle. But how can B arrive at a reasonable belief in  $v$ ? Not by direct observations, since the criterion of effectiveness refers to all times  $t$  later than  $t_0$ , and hence also to future times. On the other hand, if B arrives at a reasonable belief in  $v$  indirectly, presumably he uses induction, since  $v$  is a contingent proposition. Consequently his reasonable belief in  $v$  depends on the use of the inductive principle of inference.

<sup>12</sup> *Collected Papers* 2.693, quoted on p. 265 of *Scientific Explanation*.

Professor Braithwaite attempts to escape from this apparent circularity by the following analysis: He notes first that the circularity resides in presupposing that B must have a *reasonable belief* in *v* in order to arrive at a *reasonable belief* in *v*. But does the validity of B's inference depend upon this presupposition? There are, according to Professor Braithwaite, three possible fundamental criteria for judging whether B's use of the inductive principle of inference is valid:

- (1) B *believes v*;
- (2) B has a *reasonable belief* in *v*;
- (3) *v* is *true*.

Professor Braithwaite acknowledges that if (2) were the only acceptable criterion of validity, the inductive derivation of a reasonable belief in *v* would be circular. But he claims that (1) by itself establishes the "subjective validity" of B's use of the inductive principle of inference, (3) by itself establishes the "objective validity" of his use of the principle, and (1) and (3) together establish the "subjective-and-objective" validity of his use of the principle; and furthermore, "subjective-and-objective validity" is full justification for B to make inferences in accordance with the inductive principle of inference. Since neither subjective nor objective validity presuppose that B has a reasonable belief in *v* initially, there is no circularity in his use of the inductive principle of inference in arriving at a reasonable belief in *v*.

My first criticism of the above treatment of induction is that Professor Braithwaite has gained no advantage by performing inductions in terms of rules of inference rather than in terms of suppressed premisses, for an argument using a non-deductive principle of inference makes exactly the same assumptions as a corresponding argument in which the principle of inference is deductive but the premisses are suitably strengthened.<sup>13</sup>

Secondly, the criterion of effectiveness is both vague and weak. If it is used, some specification of the word "many" is necessary. Furthermore, if "many" does not designate even a

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Peirce, *Collected Papers*, 2.465-66.

majority, then surely it is not reasonable to believe without qualification a conclusion obtained by use of an effective rule of inference. It is reasonable rather to believe the conclusion to *some degree*, as the confirmation logicians recommend, and indeed to a rather low degree.

Most important, however, is the fact that the author's attempt to escape a circular justification of induction is entirely unconvincing. The "subjective validity" of B's use of the inductive principle of inference does not make it reasonable for him to infer according to this principle, for his belief in its effectiveness may be ungrounded. Nor does "objective validity" make it reasonable for B to use the principle, unless he also knows or reasonably believes that it is objectively valid; otherwise the correctness of his mode of inferring is merely a lucky guess. Finally, since both components are of so little help, it is hard to see how the combination "subjective-and-objective validity" can make B's use of the inductive principle of inference reasonable.

Professor Braithwaite's attempt to escape a circular justification of induction has led him to such an untenable theory of inference that it may be preferable to acquiesce to circularity. If the contingent proposition which serves as the "suppressed major premiss" is properly chosen, the circularity need not be vicious: There are certain general propositions which we accept partly because many facets of our experience somehow indicate their truth, i.e. because of an unsystematic induction on the basis of much and varied empirical data, and perhaps partly because of instinct. The vague proposition that the world is in some way uniform, and the proposition that other human beings have faculties like our own are propositions of this sort. Now suppose that  $f$  is such a proposition, with the further important property that the addition of it to the overt evidence gathered in experimentation enables a fairly unambiguous calculation of the degree of confirmation of scientifically and practically important hypotheses; in other words, whereas the intuitive rules of confirmation do not specify the value of  $C(h, e)$ , they do specify within a tolerable interval the value of  $C(h, e \text{ and } f)$ . Hence, on the assumption of  $f$  it becomes possible to use systematically gathered empirical evidence to build a sophisticated body of well-confirmed scientific

propositions. Some of these scientific propositions will concern fundamental physical facts about the world, others will concern the physiological and psychological nature of human beings, and some may concern the degree of accuracy of the instincts and unsystematic inferences of human beings. These results of science may reflexively throw light upon the proposition  $f$ , which was instrumental in reaching them. If these results confirm  $f$ , then the foundations of induction will be inductively justified; nor would this justification be a trivial *petitio principii*, since the conclusions in physics and biology and psychology depend not only upon the initial assumption of  $f$ , but also upon the empirical data which nature forces upon us. If the scientific results disconfirm  $f$ , a serious anomaly in our method of inquiry will be revealed and alternatives will have to be sought. But the fact that this disconfirmation is possible shows that we have not "blocked the road to inquiry" by holding on to  $f$  at any cost. Thus the circle seems not to be vicious, but rather to be a natural consequence of the fact that human beings are products of nature who nevertheless try to survey nature as a whole.<sup>14</sup> A difficult problem remains, of course, to select a viable proposition  $f$ . The most popular auxiliary propositions in the literature of induction have been the principles of the Uniformity of Nature and of Limited Variety, but because of either vagueness or weakness neither of these is adequate. More promising, I believe, is the Simplicity Postulate proposed by H. Jeffreys.<sup>15</sup> In the present context, however, the selection of  $f$  is less important than the general argument, in answer to Professor Braithwaite, that a contingent proposition which is part of the foundations of induction may legitimately be justified inductively.

5. The remainder of *Scientific Explanation* interprets a number of aspects of science—particularly the status of natural laws, subjunctive conditionals, and causal and teleological ex-

<sup>14</sup> Similar views, not with respect to induction but with respect to systematic philosophy, are expressed in *The Logic of Hegel*, translated by Wallace (Oxford, 1892), pp. 24-25, and in Paul Weiss' *Reality* (Princeton, 1938), p. 10.

<sup>15</sup> *Theory of Probability* (second edition, Oxford, 1948), p. 113.

planation—in terms of the conceptual scheme developed in the earlier sections of the book. The main theses are :

I. A subjunctive conditional "If  $p$  were true, then  $q$  would be true" is construed to mean " $p$  materially implies  $q$ , and in addition this material implication is derivable from some well-established hypothesis in our scientific system." This explication enables him to escape the alleged paradox that any subjunctive conditional is true if its antecedent is false, without invoking a special concept of nomic necessity (pp. 295-300).

II. A law of nature is merely a generalization expressible in the form "Every  $A$  is  $B$ ," and involves no additional element of nomically necessary connection.

III. A causal law involves no primitive concept of causal connectedness, but is merely a special sort of generalization. The author does not try to specify exhaustively the conditions for being a causal law, but suggests certain criteria roughly along Humean lines (pp. 308-11).

IV. Explanation of a *fact* consists in mentioning a second fact and a scientific law, from the conjunction of which the initial fact is deducible (pp. 319-20).

V. Teleological explanation is a legitimate and useful mode of explaining facts. The essential feature of teleological laws is that they predict the attainment of a goal under a variety of initial circumstances. The possibility of a teleological explanation of a given fact does not preclude a causal explanation of the same fact, and there is no reason to doubt that any teleological law may itself be explainable in terms of causal laws of chemistry and physics (pp. 322-41).

VI. Explanation of a *law* consists in deriving the law from a set of well-established higher-level laws in the scientific system. It follows that the highest-level laws cannot be explained (pp. 342-54).

Professor Braithwaite's account of teleological explanation is original and subtle, and he has replied persuasively to the common claim that teleological explanations are unscientific. The other

ideas are familiar, and I shall not review either the criticisms or the defenses of them.<sup>16</sup> My main criticism of his theses is that they neglect major aspects of the problems of causality, teleology and explanation; for as I argued in discussing the status of theoretical terms, not all ontological problems are solved by determining the role of terms and propositions in scientific systems. Professor Braithwaite has performed a valuable service, however, by showing systematically how his theses fit within the framework of the hypothetico-deductive method.

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<sup>16</sup> See E. Schneider, "Recent Discussion of Subjunctive Conditionals," this journal (1953); C. G. Hempel and P. Oppenheim, "Studies in the Logic of Explanation," *Philosophy of Science* (1948); A. N. Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas* (New York, 1933), Chapters VII and VIII.

## GABRIEL MARCEL AND THE HUMAN SITUATION<sup>1</sup>

NEWTON P. STALLKNECHT

THE philosophy of Gabriel Marcel, although often in its detail a model of thoroughness and persistence, is not systematic in its total presentation and is extraordinarily difficult to schematize. Marcel's very strength lies in his avoidance of definitive conclusions. He offers no final stopping place but awaits, with Socratic patience, the gradual clarification of his thought and the lifting of his horizons. Thus, one can best comment upon his reflections by repeating or perhaps even continuing them in the spirit of their author. This is possible because Marcel's work discovers, by a sort of intuitive dialectic, a line of argument or persuasion as characteristic of its author as are the systematic conclusions of a more conventional thinker.

Marcel is concerned with human existence or, better, with the quality of human life which we usually recognize more or less clearly under the concepts of freedom and responsibility. Such humanity is a *de jure* rather than a strictly *de facto* notion. We are always in danger of losing, caricaturing, or forfeiting our humanity and thus the adjective *subhuman* assumes a genuine significance, at least as indicating a limiting concept that stands as a warning before those "techniques of degradation," the modern systems of mass propaganda and thought control.

Man is a social animal but we are reminded when reading Marcel that the Latin word *socius* should be rendered as *companion*. In fact for Marcel with his profound concern for family relations, companionship is far more important than equality. For him the meaning of *human*, the very quality of man, lies in a capacity for fellowship and reciprocity. The reality of the individual appears in the freedom and good faith of his commitment, without which

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<sup>1</sup> Gabriel Marcel, *The Mystery of Being*, The Gifford Lectures, 1949 and 1950 (Chicago, 1951); *Man Against Mass Society* (Chicago, 1952); *Being and Having*, a translation by Katherine Farrer of *Etre et Avoir* (Westminster, 1949).

there is no human togetherness, no "inter-subjectivity"; and these are the very atmosphere whereby personality or subjectivity exists. The familiar virtues of respect, fidelity and obedience are boldly emphasized. It is after all in the atmosphere of family life that individual consciousness and individual volition first take shape. As Nietzsche knew, man is the only animal that makes promises. Man, we might add, is the animal who through promises and commitments, shares his life and his future with his fellows. In fact, I may say that "my life" is that something which I may share with a friend, "devote" to a cause or sacrifice for my family or my country. It is that which I may commit, which I must commit in one way or another if I am to live in active contact with my fellows.

If I should refuse to make *any* commitments, if in other words I should make a fetish of the Cyrenaics' *habeo non habeor*, my resultant isolation would caricature my humanity. A negative or unshared "freedom" is subhuman, especially since it reduces our inter-subjective existence to the present moment. Man, for Marcel, as well as for Sartre, is the future of man. To be sure, I maintain my future through prediction and through the plans which I make "for" the future. But I do not in this way bind myself to my future and morally possess it unless my planning involves a commitment, a promise made to others and, in a sense, to myself. It is only through such commitments, made in good faith, that I take hold of or enter my future. As I fail to do this my life shrinks toward a zero. We may be reminded of the *mens momentanea* which for Leibniz constituted a vanishing point where mind surrenders to matter, freedom to determinism and selfhood yields up its existence so that the monad becomes existentially as well as theoretically without windows. As early as 1930, Marcel made this very clear, in his criticism of Gide's "Doctrine of the Instant" in *Les Nourritures terrestres*:

But what is the price of [this] freedom? Nothing less than a complete renunciation of all claims to master my life. For mastering my life is in effect subordinating it to some principle. Even supposing that this principle is not a passively acquired heritage, it will still represent a phase of my past in fossilized form. This phase of my past has no right to govern my present. But if I am to shake off the yoke of the past, there is only one way of doing it—by giving myself over to the moment and forbidding myself any form of commitment, any

kind of vow. Surely you will agree with me that his liberty, in the cause of which I am putting constant constraint on myself, has nothing in it, no *content*; in fact it is the refusal of all content whatsoever. I am well aware that M. Gide—not the Gide of today, the rationalist who is perhaps rather like Voltaire, but the Gide of *Les Nourritures terrestres*—will praise the fullness of the unclouded instant, savoured in all its novelty. But it is all too clear that dialectic has the last word here: it teaches us that novelty cannot be savoured except by the unconscious reference to a past with which it is contrasted; and that, strangely enough, there is a satiety of novelty; one can be weary of this succession of one new thing after another for the very reason that they are all new.<sup>2</sup>

These reflections have significance for the student of ontology. Marcel is no longer fond of the word "existentialism" but it is still useful in describing his thought, although I am reminded in this connection most clearly of an American writer to whom the term is not usually applied. Let us recall the individualism of Warner Fite:

The traditional distinction between psychology and ethics is that, while both are (say) studies of men, psychology studies a man for what he is, ethics for what he ought to be. But now, what do you mean by what a man *is*? What a sea-anemone is, it seems that we can state clearly enough; since we are careful not to endow the sea-anemone with imagination. Hence it is just what it is, a determinate present fact and nothing more. But when we ask what a man *is* we discover (if we use moral insight) that he never *is* just what he is as a present determinate fact. Every man not absolutely dead is endowed with some imagination; and this means that what he does now and what he is now, is guided more or less by what he judges it worth while to be, i.e., by what he is trying to be and ought to be.<sup>3</sup>

Existentially speaking, this imagination is the reality of the individual, in a sense, we might say, his "substance." A "man of substance," it would follow, is not a person of wealth or of "property" but one of good faith and responsibility with whom let us say, an enterprise may be shared, a serious or genuine conversation maintained. Such a person is at once interesting and worthy of respect. His integrity can be present to us, so to speak, all in one piece, as the life of the hypocrite and the sentimentalist can never be. He can welcome us at the center of his point of

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<sup>2</sup> *Being and Having*, p. 198.

<sup>3</sup> *Moral Philosophy* (1926), p. 18.

view, which he maintains in his thought and action and offers to all who will take the trouble to enter *chez-lui* and give him the benefit of their insight. The man of substance has something of his own to offer, and this something is not a piece of property or of information, nor a role deliberately assumed, but something more substantial than these, namely, *himself* existing within the horizons of fact and value that his imagination can grasp. For the free man these horizons are themselves commitments. For the sentimentalist they are merely a decorative background.

Freedom is a matter of degree and must be constantly earned anew. It is not the freedom of an *ens a se*, or of Spinoza's *causa sui*. The free man is free as a creature is free; he is in a sense his own master, but grateful for the opportunity of being so, an opportunity which he has not himself called into existence although he has realized what was offered him. The opportunity of freedom is joined with that of service, even of obedience, as well as with that of creation. The finite creature is thrown into a world; he awakes in a world. He does not bring his freedom with him. No human being possesses a complete self-causality or *ameitas*, although the man who contemplates suicide may sometimes think of his self-destruction in these terms. Here Marcel's Christianity appears at its clearest. To save or free himself, a man must surrender or dedicate his life and he must have stumbled upon, or have been granted, the wisdom which makes this possible. He is capable of realizing a freedom which must come as a "gift," which is ultimately beyond his control, a gift of "grace" perhaps, operating through a vast network of circumstantial conditions and bestowing that one talent which it is death to hide, the opportunity of self-realization. It is Marcel's faith that no category of human being, if we think in terms of race or class, is excluded from such self-realization although to no single individual is it ever assured. Marcel's view of freedom stands in sharpest contrast with that of Sartre, a contrast which Marcel is concerned to make clear and to which he frequently returns. For instance he writes:

*So soon as man denies to himself that he is a created being, a double peril faces him: on the one hand he will be led—and this is exactly what we see in Sartre's type of existentialism—to claim for himself a kind of self-dependence which caricatures that of the Deity. He will*

be led, that is, to consider himself as a being who makes himself and is only what he makes of himself; for there is nobody who can destroy his self-sufficiency; similarly there is no gift which can be made to that sufficiency; a being conceived as Sartre conceives man is utterly incapable of receiving anything. But from another point of view, and yet in a closely connected way, the man who conceives himself as Sartre conceives man will be led to think of himself as a sort of waste product of a universe which is, for that matter, an inconceivable universe—so that we see such a man, at the same time and for the same set of reasons, exalting and abasing himself beyond all just measure.<sup>4</sup>

Again Marcel speaks with a generous admiration of the Stoic belief in an "inalienable inner sovereignty, an absolute possession of the self by the self," but he recognizes that such an autonomy can flourish only in a soil that will nourish it; and the soil, say, of a totalitarian system of education will not foster such "inner freedom." Both Stoic and Existentialist must recognize the finitude and dependency of human beings, creatures capable of freedom, but by no means assured of it or in any sense *condemned* to be free.

Freedom is a gift, an opportunity, that many are not able to recognize or to accept. The thoughtful free man knows only too well that but for favorable circumstances, perhaps but for the "grace of God," he might never have found himself. With his freedom his life is put into his charge to commit and dispose. His life then becomes his own. And as this takes place, a distinction appears between his life and his *being*. My *being* is the freedom which presides over my life. It is inner selfhood. Thus, the "grace" which offers me freedom offers me a reality that transcends my "life." Freedom belongs to the spirit—is, indeed, the spirit itself—and cannot be reduced wholly to biological or economic terms. Without freedom there is no humanity and man is reduced to the status of a thing or a machine. He becomes a "gadget" to be evaluated purely in terms of efficiency and output and, properly enough, to be scrapped once the necessary repairs become too expensive. Without freedom we have only the "mass man" who is to be considered merely as a producer and a consumer without individual quality or personal worth, whose "behavior" is

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<sup>4</sup> *Man Against Mass Society*, p. 50. Italics Marcel's.

the proper subject of the propagandist's conditioning. It is the capacity for freedom which constitutes each human being an end in himself, for whose sake machines and gadgets properly exist. In recent years we have witnessed the denial of freedom and know, to our shame and sorrow, that the above considerations are by no means purely academic.

The gift of freedom is the gift of a higher selfhood. As we become free, we grow in ontological stature. Marcel quotes Keats: The world is a "vale of soul-making." Such insight, like that of Plato's *Myth of Er*, transcends the discursive problem-stating and problem "solving" of the systematic philosopher. Marcel reminds us of Bergson when he hints that there can be no "theory" of freedom. Freedom presents us with a "mystery" rather than a problem. In any case, we must penetrate the mystery, i.e., we must clarify our experience or vision of freedom before we can formulate problems. The sense of freedom is a vision of a self-realization wholly to be achieved only by the free.

As a genuine mystery, the sense of freedom is inescapable; we feel and assume its existence throughout our lives. As Samuel Johnson seems to have believed, all our inter-subjective experience reveals the importance of freedom, although no statement can quite do it justice. Freedom is not reducible to a formula, it does not center upon a scheme of behavior contemplated in advance. There is, strictly speaking, no *technique* of freedom. Furthermore, in Marcel's mind freedom is not a Kantian *autonomy*. We cannot reduce it to acceptance of a maxim. Thus, we do not "give the law" to ourselves. The good faith or fidelity of the free man is a richer thing than any strict self-control. It is a sense of devotion, which takes spontaneously an inter-subjective form:

Something has been entrusted to us, so that we are not only responsible towards ourselves, but towards an active and superior principle—and how it goes against my inclinations to use such a disgustingly abstract word!<sup>5</sup>

Thus a father's faithfulness to his children does not commit him to any strictly predictable type of behavior, although it involves him in an unending concern for their well-being and enlightenment.

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<sup>5</sup> *Being and Having*, p. 15.

We must not forget that Marcel is a profoundly religious thinker. He has, however, no more taste for systematic theology than for systematic philosophy, and he has no interest at all in "natural religion" as it was once conceived. Marcel has moved beyond the need for scholastic arguments to prove the existence of God; but perhaps, we should say, it is the "presence" and not the "existence" of God in which he is most interested. God, it would seem, is that something not ourselves, immanent in things in life and in history, whereby we are offered freedom. Only those of us who are profoundly concerned with freedom and who know that we do not create it are ready to believe. Faith so awakened must seek understanding and this search, we will find, is an endless, although by no means a futile one. This is essentially an adventure in self-knowledge—Marcel describes it as "neo-Socratic"—whereby we bring gradually toward explicit formulation beliefs or intuitions that are somehow already present in our conduct.

In this sphere everything seems to go on as if I found myself acting on an intuition which I possess without immediately knowing myself to possess it—an intuition which cannot be, strictly speaking, self-conscious and which can grasp itself only through the modes of experience in which its image is reflected, and which it lights up by being thus reflected in them.<sup>6</sup>

Marcel's thought is not easily criticized. It is rather an invitation to a certain type of reflection than an assertion of a position formulated in propositions. But there can be no questioning its value, which is the value of self-consciousness and of the examined life. We may go further. Marcel has presented us with an individualism that is wholly free of the insolence—the *hybris*—that so often blinds humanists and individualists to the wisdom of gratitude and humility. Thus, whatever we may hear concerning his orthodoxy, we may be sure that Marcel has offered us a philosophy genuinely Christian in spirit. Indeed, the ultimate importance of his work may lie in his ability to unite—to unite, rather than reconcile—the Socratic with the Christian way of life and of thought.

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<sup>6</sup> *The Mystery of Being*, I, p. 212.

## GANDHI'S PHILOSOPHY

N. A. NIKAM

IN a book of four chapters, Dr. D. M. Datta expounds, with much insight, the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi.<sup>1</sup> His aim is to put the "scattered philosophical ideas" of Gandhi into a system to see "which of them could be traced back to ancient sources and which of them were his own." Dr. Datta's extensive knowledge of Indian philosophy enables him to perform his task very successfully. Besides professing philosophy, Datta professes non-violence: he was an inmate of Gandhi's *āshram*, and, later, did social work in the villages of East Bengal.

Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy, which he called "an experiment with truth," was not a philosophy in which he merely *interpreted* or *analysed* things for himself. It was an experience, or experiment, in which he *changed* himself and his environment. In the process, Gandhi re-oriented many traditional ideas of Hindu thought and practice. He said: "I do not claim to have originated any new principle. I have simply tried in my own way to apply eternal truths to our daily life and problem." He was an ordinary man who became a *mahātmā*, "a man of great soul": indeed, "in a beggar's garb."

Gandhi said the "eternal truths" could be applied to daily life and problems. He said they were everywhere in history: in "unrecorded history" though not everywhere in "recorded history." This distinction was vital to Gandhi. He found the *proof* of non-violence in "unrecorded history": in the fact that life persists amidst death and that there is compassion and friendliness amidst bitterness and hatred and persecution and war.

Devotion to truth was the one characteristic of Gandhi. It was his greatest quality. Love of truth led him to all kinds of

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<sup>1</sup> *The Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi* (The University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, 1953). The titles of the chapters are: I. *Background of Gandhi's Philosophy*; II. *God, World and Man*; III. *Morals, Society and Politics*; and IV. *Moral Leadership of the World*.

disciplines and experiments. He always began with smaller problems and applied the success he achieved to greater problems. "One step is enough for me" was his motto and he progressed from one step to another. The "non-violent non-co-operation" movement which won India's freedom was the outcome of the smaller success of his *satyāgraha* or "passive resistance" in South Africa. India's freedom was, for him, a means to the larger problem of world peace.

2. In the application of the "eternal truths" to problems of daily life, Gandhi had his own logic or method. His logic was a re-orientation of the traditional method of *Syādvāda* and *anekāntavāda* of Jainism into which he was born. His *Syādvāda* was not that of the learned; it was peculiarly his own. It helped Gandhi to see "the manyness of reality," as he called it. *Syādvāda* is *epistemic*; it means that many apparently conflicting judgments are possible about any object or problem, if, or when, taken in its differing or different aspects. *Anekāntavāda* is *ontic*; it means that everything has multiple characteristics. Gandhi's love of truth led him to the twin doctrines of *syādvāda* and *anekāntavāda*; or, these two resulted from his twin doctrines of *Satya* (Truth) and *ahimsā* (non-injury or non-violence). His *Syādvāda* helped him to understand the other man's point of view and to attribute no motive to him; also, it helped him, as he said, to see himself as others saw him. In other words, he developed through these doctrines a love for others even when he differed from them. The love of neighbor, indeed, the love of his enemy, was part of his love of truth and his love of truth was his love for the neighbor. "If we have no love for our neighbor," he said, "no change, however revolutionary, can do us good."

3. God was the central fact of Gandhi's life. God was not a mere intellectual conception to him. "God to be God," he said, "must rule the heart and transform it." Gandhi's aspiration was to see God face to face. "To me God is Truth and Love, God is Ethics and morality. God is fearlessness . . . . He is even the atheism of the atheist. He is a personal God to those who need His touch . . . . He simply *is* to those who have faith . . . . He is

patient but also terrible." When Gandhi successfully came out of the ordeal of his fast unto death in protest against the British Cabinet's award of separate electorates for *Harijans* (untouchables), he wrote a note to the late Rev. C. F. Andrews at Cambridge, England, which I was privileged to read. It ran thus: "Dearest Charlie, God is both indulgent and exacting."

God and Truth are convertible terms to Gandhi. The progress of his spiritual experience was a transition from "God is Truth" to "Truth is God." Denial of God we have known; denial of Truth we have not known, he said. He saw that the atheist and the sceptic in their passion for truth denied God. His *āshram* or hermitage was an abode for atheists and sceptics too. He said nobody has denied truth or can deny it, for "Truth is God."

The question whether Gandhi is atheist or a pantheist, absolutist, etc., is an academic one. "Truth is God," he said and added: "I am being daily led nearer to It by constant prayer." Gandhi's spiritual experience cannot be limited by a formula. His *Syādvāda* and *anekāntāvāda* could not bind him to this or that doctrine. He applied in his own way, the Upanisadic, *neti, neti*, "not this," "not this," i.e., "not this—e.g. only."

For Gandhi, all religions have the same truth, or elements of the same truth, and so he did not accept conversion. "Our prayer for others must be," he said, "*not* give him the light thou has given me, *but* Give him all the light and truth he needs for his development."

Gandhi called the creation of the world God's play or *māya*, but did not dismiss the world as an illusion or appearance. He did not believe that the world "is hopeless and cannot be saved."

God is, to Gandhi, the all-pervasive Reality, immanent in man and in the world (but also transcendent). If God's creation hides Him it is for man to reveal Him or discover Him by his actions, by *ahimsā* or non-injury. "To find Truth as God, the only means is *ahimsā*." God is not "was" but "is." He distinguished between "the God of history" and "the God of life" or "the living God." He said to the missionaries: "do not then preach the God of history, but show Him as He lives today through you." This would, of course, apply to everybody who goes by mere tradition or history.

Gandhi called his religion the Religion of Truth. This is the same as *ahimsā* or non-violence. "The bearing of this religion," he said, "is, or has to be seen, in one's daily social contact. To be true to such religion one has to lose oneself in continuous and continuing service of all life."

4. In his experiments with truth and non-violence, the traditional cardinal virtues of Hindu thought underwent a re-orientation. This re-orientation is the central part of Gandhi's ethico-social philosophy. Dr. Datta's treatment of this topic in his book is very instructive and I shall confine myself to a review of it to the exclusion of the other parts of the book, useful as the other parts are (indeed, the rest of what Datta says follows from this part). The traditional cardinal virtues are: *satya* (truthfulness), *ahimsā* (non-injury), *āsteya* (non-stealing), *brahmacharyā* (continence or chastity), and *aprigraha* (non-possession of unnecessary things). Gandhi added *abhaya* (fearlessness) to the list. All these were the rules of his *āshram* (hermitage) discipline. Minor things, such as manual labor, spinning, etc., were also part of the *āshram* life. Gandhi's *āshram* was sired to non-violence; without it, his non-violent campaigns would not have been possible. In his *āshram*, the individual underwent a transformation and became a social force. He developed a soul-force.

I shall now briefly comment upon the cardinal virtues, which may be described as the "primitive propositions" of Gandhi's *Principia Ethica*.

*Satya* (truth, truthfulness): The Upanisads say, *Satyam eva jayate*: "truth alone prevails." Truth alone prevails because truth alone is. Truth is *being*: it is *the same* in thought, word, and deed. But truth is not mere formal consistency or coherence of thought, word, and deed. The devil, perhaps, has both consistency and coherence in a sense too, but he has no truth and so will not prevail. Truth, according to Gandhi, is "discovery"; it is discovery of facts in an objective way. This is essential because discovery is related to decision. According to the *Vedānta*, ignorance is the root cause of bondage; to Gandhi, ignorance is the root cause of failure. He was always at pains to discover facts and to study them. Discovery also implies or entails freedom to

discover. It requires freedom of mind or reason from dogma and authority. "I do not advocate surrender of God-given reason in the face of tradition." This freedom enables Gandhi to experiment and to bring the ancient tradition, *sanātana dharma*, on which Hinduism is based, in line with reason, and so reform Hinduism from within. The freedom which Gandhi sought was also freedom from vested interests. He always retired into himself when he was to make a momentous decision, and he frequently examined himself and his motives. "An unexamined life is not worth living." Thus, discovery of truth meant, to Gandhī, *self-discovery*, *self-analysis* and *self-purification*. This enabled Gandhi to confess his own errors. Confession of his own errors was his "fearlessness" and his fear of God. While the British government laughed at his errors and his confessions, his failures lead him to greater successes. Self-analysis, self-purification, confession of his errors, and unceasing continuation of his solitary experiments with non-violence—these were part of Gandhi's love of truth; indeed, it dominated all that he did. Dr. Datta well remarks, "Gandhi as a lawyer saved both *his* soul and that of his clients."

*Ahimsā*: This literally means non-injury or non-killing. It *seems* to be a negative virtue but is not. The man who *does* nothing is not necessarily a non-violent person. *Ahimsā* is a "total" virtue. It enjoins harmlessness in thought, word, and deed. You have no right to *think* of a dagger even though you may use none; and a "cold" war that has not yet become "hot" is contrary to the principle of *ahimsā*. Freedom from anger, hatred, etc.,<sup>2</sup> is the positive content of *ahimsā*, and the love that follows, or ought to follow, is the motive of all action based on *ahimsā*. So, *ahimsā* is more an inner feeling of the heart; what it is and what it accomplishes is a "change of heart." *Ahimsā* is a reverence for all life. As such, it is the basis of all other cardinal virtues. *Ahimsā paramo dharmah*: "non-violence is the highest law," says the epic of the *Mahābhārata*; *ahimsā* is the basis of all

<sup>2</sup> The *Gītā* says, and asks: "Know then that the soul is unborn and is indestructible; and he who knows this, how could he slay or be slain?" (II. 21.) Even so, in Gandhi's philosophy, *ahimsā* or non-violence is freedom from anger, hatred etc.; if so, how could such a man cause (deliberate) injury to any living being?

duties. Yet Gandhi did not advocate the mere exaltation of life as an end in itself; nor did he believe in martyrdom. He said about a follower of his, who was threatening to fast unto death to gain his interest and was on the point of death: "I would rather that he lost his life than that untruth succeeded." And he shocked some of his more orthodox and literal interpreters of *ahimsā*, when he permitted the doctor to put to sleep, by an injection, a calf in his *ashrām* which was in excruciating pain. While Gandhi stuck to the absolute ideal of *ahimsā*, he realized that man "cannot for a moment live without consciously or unconsciously committing outward *himsā* (injury)." But he did not draw from this the inference that violence was the *rule* of action. The *Gītā*, which was Gandhi's inspiration and companion, says: *svalpampi asya dharma-sya trāyate mahatō bhayāt*: "even a little of this righteousness (*dharma*) saves us from imminent danger." Gandhi's experiment was a progressive enlargement of the sphere and context of the operation of the "even a little" of the *dharma* of non-violence. "When you want to find Truth as God," he said, "the only inevitable means is *ahimsā*."

In a non-violent fight, there is no bitterness; in a non-violent victory, there is no humiliation of the vanquished; in a non-violent struggle, both the victor and the vanquished are exalted.

*Asteya (non-stealing) and aparigraha (non-acceptance)*: It is better to take these two together as they are elements in a Gandhian socialism or social justice. In Gandhian social-ethics, *asteya* has undergone considerable re-orientation. From being merely a moral quality of the individual it has become a moral quality of the social order. The *Gītā* says: "he who cooks for himself without giving is a *thief*" (III. 12.). But he who *takes* without being given is also a "thief." *Asteya* means not taking away the property of another unless it is given by him. If *ahimsā* is right to life, *asteya* is right to property. It is easy to see how *asteya* follows from *ahimsā*. The good life is, ultimately,

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\* Both of these are forms of "covetousness," and both may be traced to the rule of conduct expressed in the *Isa Upanisad*: *ma gradah kasyas-vidhanam*: "covet not another's wealth."

non-possession (at least, it is not calling anything your *own*); but, it is also right possession. Right possession is social order. Everyone has a right to right possession; therefore, to rob another man of his right possession is doing injury. *Asteya* is a duty not merely of the poor but of the rich, and "exploitation" is a form of "robbery." No class in a social order should think of the other as rich only because it is not robbed; and no class should become rich by robbing others of what is due to them.

Accumulation is having more than you want; having more than you want is a form of "stealing" and so is a form of injury. But supposing you give away what you have accumulated, how, or on what motive, are you giving it away? This question is part of the ethics of *ahimsā* and is more fully developed by Gandhi's disciple, Ācharya Vinobā Bhave in his social conception of *bhoodān yajna*: "the-free-gift-of-land-as-sacrifice" (and not as mere charity). In a gift that is charity, the recipient is obliged to the giver and so there is no equality between the two; whereas, in a gift that is a "sacrifice" there is true relationship of equality, for what is given away belongs to all and he who gives has been until now only a "trustee." From this idea is developed the Gandhian notion of the rich as the "trustees" of the poor. This is very important for the Gandhian social revolution, as it does not accept class struggle as the basic truth of history and does not, therefore, advocate class hatred and the overthrow of capitalism by force. (What "right possession" is, I suppose, is dependent upon the context and situation in a social process, e.g., to buy foreign made cloth at the expense of indigenous industry is not "right possession," since it perpetuates economic and political bondage.)

*Brahmacharyā* (celibacy or continence): This literally means "conduct which puts us in touch with God." Gandhi does not mean that marriage is unnatural and celibacy the natural state. He means marriage is the natural state and continence in the married state is, or ought to be, natural also. Marriage aims at a spiritual union through the physical. Gandhi had special faith in the capacity of woman to resist man's lust and to turn his lust and relation of flesh to a spiritual partnership and union.

*Brahmacharyā* ordinarily means control of the sex-impulse. Gandhi understands by the practice of *brahmacharyā* the control

of *all* the senses including the mind. In Indian thought, the lower aspect of mind is included in the senses. Sense control is impossible without mind control. The *Gītā* speaks of the man who outwardly abstains from sensual pleasure but keeps thinking about sensual objects as a "hypocrite" given to "false conduct" (*mithyāchara*). To escape being a "hypocrite" is not to make an all out effort to lead a life of sensual abandonment. A dedicated life is impossible without continence. Furthermore, we do not yet know the effect of food and diet on sex impulse and birth-control is not the only means available. Gandhi continually experimented with the effect of diet on the sex-impulse. Control of the "palate" was one of the means to sense and sex control. Exploitation of the sex-impulse by literature is as bad as any other form of exploitation and inconsistent with the dignity of man and a social order based on non-violence.

*Abhaya* (fearlessness): Gandhi added this to the list of cardinal virtues, or, perhaps, it is better to say that he included it. The Upanisads say: "Brahman is fearlessness," *abhayam hi vai Brahma*. Gandhi would say: "Truth is fearlessness." It is easy to see why Gandhi added *abhaya* to the list. Non-violence is not for the coward or the weakling. The practice of non-violence requires moral strength which comes from fearlessness and the greatest of all fears is the fear of death. The votary of *ahimsā* must be a stranger to it. He is not so cowardly or violent as to take another man's life, yet he is not fearful of laying down his own in the cause of truth. The only weapon with which he fights evil is his life. Fearlessness is not taking foolish risks but rather preparing to meet cheerfully the challenging situations in life as they come and sacrificing, if need be, one's life for the cause of truth. Many are the moving tales which I have heard from those who walked with Gandhi on his barefoot pilgrimage of peace and love to Noakhalli, where communal massacre had broken out. A votary of *ahimsā*, or non-violence, even if he can never be sure of success in his experiments with it, must at least be free from the fear of disappointment or failure.

These five-fold moral ideals assure the progress of the individual and the evolution of ideal democracy. "I hold," said Gandhi, "that democracy cannot be evolved by forcible methods.

The spirit of democracy cannot be imposed from without. It has to come from within." Gandhi's conception of an ideal social order is a de-centralised, co-operative commonwealth based on the rights, dignity and freedom of the individual. The law of non-violence rules the individual and his government, for the individual is the architect of his own government.

5. Minor Gandhian maxims: Besides the cardinal virtues, there were certain typical maxims which Gandhi observed in practice. It is a merit of Dr. Datta that he has an eye for them. His relevant exposition of these maxims enhances the value of the book. All of them are important and practical. They are: (a) "The means as well as the end must be right." Gandhi was not a revolutionary who believed that the end justifies the means. Also, it seemed to Gandhi that in our civilization means have become ends. (b) "One step is enough for me." Gandhi called himself a "practical idealist." This was his realism. His realism looked to the present, made good use of it, and he was particular in taking well the present step and then leaving the rest. This is not opportunism. (c) The utilitarian maxim, "the greatest happiness of the greatest number" had no place in Gandhi's conception of democracy or humanism. To him "number" was not very important, and for two reasons. A true humanism must aim at the greatest good of *all*; <sup>4</sup> therefore, number is irrelevant. Secondly, the success or failure of non-violence is not dependent upon the success or failure of numbers. That there are no "numbers" yet ready for it is no disproof of the truth or validity of non-violence. "The valiant in spirit glory in fighting alone." (d) "The true source of right is duty." In his letter in *Unesco's* book on *Human Rights*, Gandhi said: "A duty well done is the condition of rights." He put duty first and rights afterwards.

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<sup>4</sup> This philosophy which has the good of all and not merely of "the greatest number" is more fully expressed by Ācharya Vinoba Bhāve. It is called *Sarvato bhadra*: "Good-on-all-sides-work." Gandhi was not in favour of the philosophy of "numbers," because "numbers" means "majority rule." He said: "it is slavery to be amenable to the majority, no matter what its decisions are . . . . What we want, I hope, is a government not based on coercion even of a minority but on its conversion."

(e) Success meant, to Gandhi, "the will-to-make-the-effort." "Satisfaction lies in the effort; full effort is full victory."

(f) Gandhi's largeheartedness and his sense of realism helped him to distinguish between men and their deeds; e.g., he said, "Hate not the British but the British system," and "Heal thyself." No upliftment or awakening which does not come from within a man or a group or a nation is successful or permanent.

The practice of these cardinal virtues and the moral maxims did not make Gandhi an ascetic, and his intention was not to turn society into a group of ascetics.

6. Gandhi's conception of the State and the individual and social order. Is Gandhi's conception of society a "classless" one? In one sense it is; in another sense, his conception of social order is of a "mobile" society based on the natural division of "classes." "Gandhi distinguishes between "caste" *Jāti*, and "class," *varna* (literally "colour"). Caste is the hereditary form of social hierarchy which Gandhi disliked. *Varna* is the natural division of society, everywhere, based upon a differentiation of function or occupation or labour. All kinds of labour are necessary for a social structure and they develop and are diversified in the social process. As all kinds of labour or work are equally necessary and socially valuable, there is no higher or lower labour or work. The *bhāngī* (sweeper) is as important as a viceroy. Gandhi called himself a *bhāngī*. The only way to give social mobility, according to Gandhi, is to institute equality of wages. Then, and only then, will each man choose the kind of work he likes or which he is fitted for. This is the Gandhian "equality of man."

Gandhi was bitterly conscious of the fact that a national government, like a foreign government, might become an obstacle to the free growth of the individual. So he was against the increase of the power of the State. He said: "I look upon an increase of the power of the State with the greatest fear, because, although while apparently doing good by minimizing exploitation, it does the greatest harm to mankind by destroying individuality which lies at the root of all progress."

Gandhian "nationalism" is not the type of nationalism, known to history, which seeks to dominate others or its neigh-

hours. Nor was it an isolated nationalism, windowless and shut up in darkness behind a curtain. "My notion of *Purna Swaraj* (i.e., complete self-rule) is not isolated independence but healthy and dignified interdependence." Gandhian nationalism is the philosophy of a United Nations.

7. Behind all these maxims and practices of Gandhi are two sovereign principles which Dr. Datta does well to point out. (a) "The spiritual perception of every being as the manifestation of the self or God that is present in all." The *Isa* Upanisad, which Gandhi constantly used, says: "He who uniformly sees all beings even in his self and his own self in all beings, does not feel repelled therefrom" (i.e., from other beings) (VI. *Isa*). Gandhi's "practical idealism" was a constant effort toward a verification and full practice of this truth. Gandhi was not "repelled" by anyone. (b) The second was Gandhi's philosophy of work: not so much the desire to achieve success, as the readiness to make the effort. "Full effort is full victory." *Karmanyeva adhikāraṣthe*, says the *Gītā*: "to action, or work, alone hast thou a right." There is no failure in making the effort. If there is a failure, says the *Gītā*, again: "bring Me thy failure." As Dr. Datta says: "Like the Buddha he (Gandhi) believed that constant vigilance and effort were necessary for a good moral life" and social order. Yes, the aim of Gandhian philosophy is "to make new history and not repeat it."

I have said enough to indicate that Dr. Datta's book is extremely useful, for the wealth of information it contains as well as for the readable presentation of the ideas and ideals of Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy.

Mysore University.

**KNOWLEDGE AND CERTAINTY**

**RICHARD TAYLOR**

1. A conviction constitutes knowing, if it is (a) complete, (b) based on sufficient evidence, and (c) true.

2. Conviction is complete if, whatever further evidence might be adduced, one could become no more convinced.

3. Sufficient evidence justifies assent, correctly or erroneously. But one is not obliged to give a criterion for such sufficiency in order to assert, sometimes, that he has it; just as, with no fixed criterion of baldness, one can sometimes discriminate instances of it. Sufficiency of evidence does not require all the evidence there is; in the case of the most elementary beliefs the possible evidence may be inexhaustible. Nor does it require evidence which logically entails; one knows much that is not entailed by anything else he knows.

4. Certainty attaches to some (only) of our epistemic states, and only derivatively to statements. It is an error to speak, except elliptically, of the latter, whether they be empirical or logical, as certain or uncertain, or even as true or false, since these are at least dependent on what thoughts such statements are used to express.

5. Certainty is not coextensive with knowledge, for one might know, without knowing that he knows; e.g., his evidence might be sufficient without his realizing that it is.

6. Certainty is not mere conviction, for it qualifies only knowing, which, unlike being convinced, entails truth.

7. The conditions of certainty cannot be formulated in any useful way, for we should have to say that a belief is certain if it is (a) an instance of knowing and (b) known to be such; whereupon it could be asked whether the latter knowledge is certain.

8. While there is thus no independent criterion of certainty, one may nevertheless sometimes be entitled to assert it; for analogously, there is no criterion for, say, being surprised, though one can sometimes justifiably assert that he is surprised.

9. No distinction is tenable between empirical and other beliefs with respect to their certainty. If there were no certainty for empirical beliefs there would be none for any others; for *if* all the former *could* be mistaken, so also could one's beliefs as to what thoughts involve contradictions or necessary entailments. A statement may express a logical necessity, but one's belief that it does has no such guarantee. Again, while a disconfirmation would destroy one's empirically grounded certainty, the same holds for his certainty in any logical truth. No logical certainty can be disconfirmed, but neither can any empirical one. No distinction on the basis of what can or cannot be disconfirmed is tenable, without the question-begging device of admitting only the logical sense of "can."

10. "Logical certainty" designates neither a *kind* nor a *degree* of certainty, but applies only derivatively to those statements used to express thoughts, the denial of which can be seen by some to involve a contradiction, and which can therefore be believed by them with certainty. But some thoughts (like my thought of having a head), the denials of which involve no contradictions, are no less apt to be known with absolute certainty, and are often more so. To say, therefore, that this or that *statement* is not "logically certain" implies nothing whatever concerning whether or not anyone knows with certainty the thought expressed by use of it.

*Brown University.*

## COMMENTS ON TAYLOR'S THESES

### I

RODERICK FIRTH

Professor Taylor's "theses" seem to be resolutions, or proposals, concerning the use of epistemological terms such as "certain," "know," "sufficient evidence," "truth," and "statement." Assuming that I am not expected to make counter-proposals, I can only point to gaps which Professor Taylor must fill by introducing additional terms.

1. If Taylor's first two proposals are accepted, we must introduce a term to replace "know" in a familiar, but weaker, sense of the word. In ordinary speech it is correct to say that I *know* that *p* (i.e., that such and such is the case), even if my conviction that *p* might be somewhat increased by further evidence. In Taylor's stronger sense of "know" and "knowledge," it is doubtful that we have much, if any, knowledge. For even if we sometimes have evidence which is *conclusive*, and which therefore might be said to "justify" complete conviction, it can still be doubted that in such cases we are as fully convinced as we *could* be.

2. In Theses 5 and 7, "knowing *p* with certainty" seems to be defined as (or at least to entail) "knowing that one knows *p*." But we must recognize other important meanings. Thus "I know *p* with certainty" is often used to mean merely "I know *p* and I am completely convinced that *p*." This alternative presupposes a weaker definition of "know" than the one Taylor proposes in Thesis 1, for otherwise it is redundant. It interprets certainty as "mere conviction," but at the same time permits us to say that it "qualifies knowing." (Note that this possibility is not recognized by Taylor's Thesis 6.)

3. Thesis 9 reveals what may be the most important gap in Taylor's terminology. "I know *p* with certainty" has sometimes been used by philosophers to mean "I know *p* and I have *maximum*

evidence for  $p$  (i.e., evidence which could not be increased)." In this sense some logical knowledge (perhaps only of a comparatively simple kind) *might* be certain although no empirical knowledge were certain (because, let us say, maximum evidence for an empirical belief is never obtainable). To discuss such a possibility we need a word to carry this philosophical meaning of "certainty."

4. Given this meaning of "certainty," logical certainty, contrary to Thesis 10, might be described as a "kind" of certainty. It would be the certainty obtainable because of the special nature of the evidence for logical statements.

*Harvard University.*

## II

RICHARD B. BRANDT

1. The most debatable part of Taylor's analysis of "know" (for contexts like "X knows that  $p$ ") is his concept of a belief being based on *sufficient evidence*. For, if "evidence" means "proposition known to be true," the definition of "know" is circular. Moreover, the logical connection between the *sufficient evidence* and the proposition believed is left unspecified. But perhaps this is proper, in view of the loose ordinary use of "know" ("I just *knew* the Yankees would win"). Finally, Taylor does not indicate why stricter requirements (e.g., that the evidence *entail* the proposition said to be known) would not be in order for the analysis of "know" as used by many philosophers; nor does he consider whether such a usage might not be clarifying for epistemology.

2. The ordinary use of "certain" is at least as loose as that of "know." In one usage, "X is certain that  $p$ " means no more than "X is convinced that  $p$ ," and, contrary to Taylor, does not entail "X knows that  $p$ ." A perhaps more frequent usage, e.g., "It is certain that he will sign the bill," may sometimes function as no more than an emphatic form of "He will sign the bill!" But

very likely this latter use more often may properly be construed as an assertion about the existence of relevant evidence and, at least by implication, of the speaker's familiarity with that evidence. But it is not obvious why the whole statement is not synonymous simply with "It is known that he will sign the bill," or by implication, "I know that he will sign the bill," rather than entailing, as Taylor suggests (Thesis 5), that somebody "knows that he knows that the bill will be signed." Taylor's proposal here seems to forsake analysis of ordinary usage in favor of a stricter use he thinks convenient or clarifying for epistemology.

3. Evidently (Theses 7 and 8) Taylor does not think that even "X knows that he knows that *p*" is synonymous with "X is certain that *p*," for he says there is "no independent criterion" of certainty. His reason for this seems to be (similar to Moore's open-question argument against naturalistic analyses in ethics) that, when A says, "X knows that he knows that *p*," B can still intelligibly ask, "But is he *certain* that *p*?" (This must be what Taylor means, for it would not be a relevant point if B asked, "Does he know for certain that he knows that *p*?" ) But I am not sure whether, assuming Taylor's view about the nature of knowing, this is a sensible question. For if B is ready to concede that X is convinced, that what X is convinced of is true, and that X has sufficient evidence (and moreover all this over again for the statement that he is convinced, etc.), what more can he be asking for? Perhaps whether the evidence is a little better than *sufficient*—say, *conclusive*? (Taylor didn't tell us how good *sufficient evidence* is.) Taylor, then, holds that "certain" is an unanalyzable term, but one which *entails* "knows that he knows"; but he hasn't proved this.

4. Taylor's theory of "know" and "certain" is so constructed, I think, as not to permit one to demonstrate that any of the following statements is always mistaken: "I know (am certain) that the world was not created yesterday." "I know (am certain) because I clearly remember that I dreamt such-and-such last night." "I know (am certain) that I have a hand." "I know (am certain) that my son felt very disappointed about the outcome of the World Series." And so on. And of course one can use these terms, if one pleases, in such a way that all these statements can

be correct. All the same, this does not show that the evidence for, say, sense-datum statements is not different from, and better than, it is for these statements. Nor does it show that there are not different kinds of justification for believing different kinds of statements. Nor does it excuse the epistemologist from making clear the different types of justification and their interconnections. And it may be that for this task of the epistemologist it is convenient and clarifying to use "know" and "certain" in special ways different from any which would permit the above statements to be asserted without error.

*Swarthmore College.*

### III

**CARL G. HEMPEL**

1. The adequacy of a proposed philosophical analysis depends essentially upon the clarity of the concepts used in the analysis. On this count, Mr. Taylor's analysis of knowing is questionable because it relies on the concepts of completeness of conviction and sufficiency of evidence, whose intended meanings seem no clearer than that of the analysandum.

2. Completeness of conviction seems to be taken, in Thesis 2, as depending upon the subject who has the conviction; so that when for one subject, A, a certain body of evidence, *e*, is associated with complete conviction concerning some belief, *h*, then another subject, B, whose evidence is exactly the same, may yet lack complete conviction concerning *h*. But if *h* is true and if *e* is "sufficient evidence" for it, then, by virtue of Thesis 1, A knows that *h*, whereas B does not, although both of them base their beliefs on the same evidence. This consequence strongly conflicts with the customary use of "knowing."

3. With Mr. Taylor's analysis of knowing, I agree on these points: truth of the belief in question, and sufficient evidence for

its acceptance are necessary conditions of knowing. But sufficiency of evidence must here be understood in a non-subjective sense which requires much further analysis. The additional demand for completeness of conviction is superfluous and even irrelevant for the analysis of knowing.

4. What Mr. Taylor means by "certainty" is not sufficiently explicated in his theses. To be sure, we use many terms without being able to state clear criteria for their application; but, contrary to his Thesis 8, I think one cannot be said to be using a term *justifiably* except by reference to rules or criteria for its use. Also, the term "certainty" has a number of quite different meanings which require careful distinction; for this reason, the suggested analogy with the term "surprised" seems inappropriate.

5. There is no good reason to conceive the assignment of truth or falsity to thoughts or "epistemic states" as systematically prior to the attachment of truth values to statements. In fact, the meaning of the former kind of ascription is quite problematic, whereas a precise explication of truth for statements is available in the semantic theory of truth; and the most promising approach to an analysis of truth for thoughts seems to be via the semantical concept. The latter specifically applies to statements, i.e., sentences of an interpreted language, and thus does take into account what those sentences are used to express.

*Yale University.*

#### IV

**RODERICK M. CHISHOLM**

1. Mr. Taylor says that "conviction constitutes knowing, if it is (a) complete, (b) based on sufficient evidence, and (c) true." Qualification (b), I believe, is not illuminating in this context. Ordinarily, when we say that a man has evidence *e* for some hypothesis *h*, we mean that he *knows* something *e* which justifies belief

in *h*. In this use of "evidence," Mr. Taylor would be telling us that a man's conviction constitutes *knowing* if it is justified by something he *knows*. Some philosophers have defined "evidence" without reference to knowing (e.g., "a man has evidence *e* for *h* if and only if *e*, as sensible stimulus, motivates him to believe *h*"); but it is doubtful that the term "evidence" in Mr. Taylor's statement can be interpreted in this way.

2. The term "sufficient" is a relational word and "sufficient evidence," therefore, presumably designates evidence which is sufficient *for* something. But sufficient for what? Mr. Taylor states in Thesis 3 that "sufficient evidence" designates evidence sufficient to *warrant* or *justify* a belief; but in this case his description of knowing may be broader than he intends. For example: if a superstitious mother finds in the tea leaves an omen that her son will return, her conviction that he will return may be complete, in Mr. Taylor's sense of "complete"; if she learns from a reliable newspaper that he is on the way, she may thus have evidence sufficient to justify her belief; and if he does return, her belief is true. But I doubt that Mr. Taylor would want to say she *knows* he will return.

3. Paragraph 1 above suggests that Mr. Taylor should revise his remarks about *knowing* that one knows. He assumes, apparently, that, in order to know that one knows, one must know that each of the three conditions, mentioned in his first statement, obtains. Hence to know that one knows *h*, one must *know* that *e* is evidence for *h*, but to know this, if my first paragraph is correct, one must know that one *knows e*; and to know this, according to Mr. Taylor's statements, one must know that one has sufficient evidence *e'* for *e* . . . , and so on. Instead of saying that a man may sometimes know that he knows and sometimes know without knowing that he knows, it would seem to be preferable, I should think, to say either: (i) that "knowing that *h*" entails "knowing that one knows that *h*," and hence also "knowing that one knows that one knows . . . that *h*," in the same trivial sense in which it also entails "knowing that it is true that it is true . . . that *h*"; or (ii) that one can *never* know that one knows *h*.

4. Even if Mr. Taylor's distinction between *knowledge* and *certainly* is not clearly applicable, two of his points about certainty, it seems to me, are true and important when applied to knowledge. (i) He states that there is "no independent criterion of certainty." The term "criterion" is commonly used in two different senses: if a doctor, for example, says that he has a *criterion* for neuritis, he may mean that he knows of some symptom which has been found empirically to be an *invariable concomitant* of neuritis, or he may mean that he can provide an illuminating *definition* of neuritis. I doubt very much that anyone knows of any invariable concomitant of knowledge (Thomas Hobbes: "The inn of evidence has no signboard"); and I doubt that anyone can provide an illuminating definition of "knowledge" in the sense (one of the ordinary senses of "knowledge") in which Mr. Taylor uses the term. (ii) I believe that Mr. Taylor is right in intimating that there is no good reason for accepting the following philosophical doctrine, viz., that empirical beliefs are less likely to be instances of knowing (or of certainty) than are beliefs having a logical subject-matter. So far as I know, the only arguments which philosophers offer in behalf of this doctrine are arguments which presuppose it or which, as Mr. Taylor suggests, depend upon interpreting the word "certain" as meaning the same as "necessary," or "analytic," or "logically true."

*Brown University.*

# V

## DONALD WALHOUT

1. Knowledge is first defined as a species of conviction which is complete, sufficient in evidence, and true (Thesis 1). Certainty is then said to characterize knowledge (Thesis 6) but to be narrower than knowledge on the ground that one can "know, without knowing that he knows" (Thesis 5). Theses 1 and 5, however, conflict. For, so long as one is not certain of one's knowledge—does not know that he knows, to use the author's

ambiguous phrase—one's conviction is not "complete," which was one of the essentials of knowing (Thesis 1). That is to say, if one knows, and then later becomes certain that he knows, i.e., comes to know that he knows, this added assurance will surely increase the conviction of the original knowing. For instance, an astute amateur may know that he has made a good move in winning a game of chess; but his conviction in this knowledge will surely be enhanced upon learning from an expert that, logically considered, only that particular move could have won the game for him. In short, knowing that one knows is itself part of the evidence completing the conviction of knowing. Without this "knowing that he knows," one's conviction is not complete (Thesis 2) and there is no knowing to begin with. Hence, within the given conditions of knowing (Thesis 1) there can be no knowledge without certainty, i.e., without knowing that one knows (contrary to Thesis 5).

2. Nevertheless, despite this inconsistency, I still prefer the author's distinction between knowledge and certainty, partly because it agrees more with usage and partly because there actually are two different epistemic states to which these terms call attention. Perhaps the difficulty can be removed by eliminating the factor of completeness from the conditions of knowing (Thesis 1) and describing it instead as a condition of certainty (Thesis 7). This transfer is desirable for another reason as well, namely: so far as Thesis 2 is concerned, I tend to think that there is never a time in which we "could become no more convinced," even if the "further evidence" adds little that is cognitively new but only multiplies the existing evidence and heightens the emotional comfort expressed by "See! verified over and over, all the time." Thus completeness (Thesis 2) characterizes certainty but not all cases of knowing. The final upshot is the delineation of three well-marked epistemic states—unfounded conviction, sufficiently evidenced knowledge, and complete certainty.

3. Thesis 3 is sound, but I would rephrase the first sentence. One is, I think, "obliged to give a criterion of such sufficiency;" the real point is that that criterion may in some cases be a purely subjective one, as in my knowledge of a pain, or may in other

cases be no more than a socially accepted usage of terms, as in our knowledge of baldness. One is always obliged to give the criterion he is using for taking evidence as sufficient; but that criterion might not be sharable or precise.

4. Except for the condition of completeness already mentioned, I agree with the assertion of Thesis 7, but disagree with the supporting reason. I am inclined to think that the difficulty raised here, viz., that of an infinite regress with respect to being certain about knowing, would be overcome in an actual cognition of complete certainty. That is, knowing, knowing that one knows, being certain of knowing that one knows, *ad infinitum*, would all be comprehended in a single comprehensive cognition of certainty. The author here lapses into the error (rightly pointed out in Thesis 4) of regarding certainty as applying to statements rather than to epistemic states. Therefore, the reason why the conditions of certainty cannot be fully formulated is, rather, that the instances of this phenomenon which are available seem to be either (a) purely private in nature (example in Thesis 8), or (b) so rare as not to afford sufficient data for determination.

5. I agree with Theses 9 and 10 and would emphasize the distinction between certainty and logical necessity. I would also avoid the word *absolute* in Thesis 10, on grounds that, while human certainty may be complete (as specifically defined in Thesis 2), there might be a transcendental type of certainty which would more appropriately be called absolute.

*Rockford College.*

## RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

**RICHARD TAYLOR**

My theses suffer from the need for brevity, forcing upon the reader a difficult task of interpretation.

1. Professor Firth construes them as "resolutions or proposals," though I said nothing to indicate that they were so intended, and he gives no reason for so interpreting them. If one says, "some empirical beliefs are quite certain," he *can* be taken to be proposing a use for "certain," and if one says "grass is green," he *can* be understood as proposing a use for "green"; but neither is a natural interpretation.

2. Much of his, and Brandt's comment, is thus only to the effect that there are meanings of words other than those I employ—which is of course most obviously true, but as obviously irrelevant to any *philosophical* (as distinguished from lexicographical) question that has ever been asked. Nearly *all* words, epistemological or other, can be and are used in all sorts of ways by all sorts of people, ignorant and learned; no philosophy is needed to know this. But this humble fact hardly serves as a datum for solving any problem.

3. Firth's (3), if it is not another point of vocabulary, appears to be no more than a denial of what I asserted, expressed in such a way as to let it appear that my view contained an *oversight*. I said there is no special kind of certainty called "logical," and gave my reasons for so believing; he calls this rejection a "gap" in my philosophy. It is as if a metaphysician were to formulate careful arguments to prove there is no God, and then receive, as a criticism, the remark that there was a "gap" in his system, namely, that he had left God out.

4. Firth doubts, in his (1), that there is much, *if anything*, concerning which he is completely convinced. (Walhout expresses a similar opinion.) But this, I submit, only confuses *becoming more convinced* with *finding more evidence*. It would require him to say, I think, that he is not *quite* convinced that, say, he has a head (since he always *could* look once more in a mirror to see); and I doubt that this is true.

5. Professors Hempel, Brandt and Chisholm all object to my description of knowing, in (1), Hempel because it is unedifying, Brandt and Chisholm because it is circular. With these criticisms I must agree. If having evidence involves cognition, as it does,

it is plainly worthless to describe knowing in terms of it, as I did. I am sure now that I cannot, and I doubt that anyone can, say what knowing something *consists of*.

6. Mr. Hempel argues, in his (2) and (3), that if the conditions of truth and sufficient evidence are fulfilled, then one has knowledge, whether he is completely convinced or not; further, that this is "the customary use of 'knowing.'" This entails that the statement "I know this is Tuesday, though I'm not yet completely convinced of it," reflects *the* customary use of "know." Indeed, if someone out of sheer prejudice refused to accept some truth based on overwhelming evidence, which he accepted as evidence but rejected as probative, it would appear consistent with Mr. Hempel's view to say that he nevertheless knows it; but to me it appears so uncustomary as to be self-inconsistent.

7. Mr. Hempel's criticism does suggest another serious weakness in my (1), however; namely, that on my view, all that may be needed sometimes in order to make a man know something, is somehow to make him more convinced—an unwelcome consequence which is also suggested by Mr. Chisholm's (2). Thus, in terms of Mr. Chisholm's example, it would be consistent with my (1) to say that a woman whose conviction results mainly from superstition nevertheless *knows* that about which she is convinced, provided it is true and otherwise evidenced. I would not try to defend this, nor deny that it follows from my (1).

8. Mr. Hempel's further comment, (4), that the use of words without reference to the rules or criteria of their use is not *justified* seems to entail that words are almost never used justifiably, such references being exceedingly rare outside technical literature. If this were amended to say that one's use is unjustified unless he *can* give a criterion or rule, then this would seem to be false; nearly everyone uses "and" justifiably, for instance, though few besides logicians can frame a *rule* for its use. Moreover, one could not possibly give a non-arbitrary criterion for the use of a word (or anything else) without *first* knowing how to use it—which renders a criterion superfluous. If one applies "cat" indifferently to cats, rabbits and hamsters, any criterion or rule *he*

would give would be as odd as his usage; but it could only come from his usage.

9. Hempel's last comment, that truth values may be ascribed primarily to statements and derivatively to the beliefs expressed by them, appears to me provably wrong. If a Robinson Crusoe had some simple, unformulated beliefs (about where to fish, where to hunt, etc.), but no language whatever, and had never seen nor heard a sentence or statement, his beliefs would nonetheless be true or false; and if he then *invented* a strange system of marks, and made statements with it, there would be no way whatever of ascribing truth or falsity to these without *first* discovering what thoughts they were being used to express. Mr. Hempel's reference here to an *interpreted* language thus seems to me to beg the question.

10. My replies to Firth apply equally to much of Brandt's discussion, which similarly abounds with appeals to various possible usages, considerations of what might be synonymous with what, etc. He even charges me with *forsaking* "analysis of ordinary usage," as if one were entitled to no other aim.

11. His (3) is a misinterpretation, however, for I *did* use "certainty" to mean the knowledge of one's state of knowing. That I *could* not mean that follows, he thinks, from my denial of any criterion for certainty; but plainly, equivalent expressions by themselves supply no criteria of application. One might know that two expressions (like "ZnCl<sub>2</sub>" and "zinc chloride") are equivalent, and yet have no idea what, if anything, they apply to.

12. I fail to see how my statements have the consequence Brandt educes in his (4). He suggests that such a statement as "I know I have a hand" *might* always be false, and hence no item of knowledge; but I likewise said that no false belief can be knowledge. My view simply was that *if* the thought expressed by those marks is true, sufficiently evidenced, and believed with complete conviction—and in my own case it is all three—then it is known, and *may* be—as again in my case it is—quite certain.

13. Mr. Walhout's first point, that my (1) and (5) conflict, is, I regret, true, and is well illustrated by the chess player example. There is a verbal argument that I could oppose to it, but it would not be convincing; hence, the criticism must stand. I would also assent to his suggestion for removing the difficulty.

14. Mr. Chisholm's (3) attacks the same two theses, but instead of showing that they conflict, he shows that the combination of them forces me to choose between two alternative views, both which I had in fact implicitly denied. His argument is predicated upon acceptance of my (1), and two good reasons have already been found for rejecting it; let this, then, be a third. But independently of that, and in view of Mr. Walhout's comment, it seems necessary to distinguish knowledge and certainty otherwise than I did, and accept the first of Mr. Chisholm's two alternatives—viz., that in any case of knowing, one knows that he knows—without letting this entail that he has certainty.

15. Mr. Walhout's insistence in his (3) upon a criterion for sufficiency of evidence seems, however, to involve the same difficulty as Hempel's insistence on criteria for verbal usage; viz., that there is *no* way of formulating a non-arbitrary criterion for anything, without *first* being able to distinguish that for which the criterion is designed, which makes a criterion worthless. By what *other* means, for instance, could one frame a criterion for, say, sufficiency of empirical evidence? And what reason is there for thinking that, *without* a criterion, we are helpless to recognize such sufficiency (as in the case of the evidence for my having a head) when it obviously exists?

16. Concluding, it appears that my (1) was a mistake, my (3) inadequate, my (5) and (7) wrongly put. My (4), (9) and (10), which seem to me important, evidently still stand.

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## NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

### THE PRINCIPLE OF FOUR-CORNERED NEGATION IN INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

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THE principle of four-cornered negation, "S is neither P, nor not-P, nor both P and not-P, nor neither P nor not-P," is also called the four-fold negation by Indian logicians and metaphysicians.<sup>1</sup> It has had a varied development. It was rejected by many; but many others accepted it. And those who accepted it used it for different purposes.

#### I

The principle seems to have been first used by Sanjaya, who may safely be assigned to a period earlier than the sixth century B. C. His name was known to the earliest Buddhists, and he is thought to have lived and taught before Buddha, who is assigned to the sixth century B. C. Sanjaya is said to have given a negative answer to all such questions as: (1) Is it good? (2) Is it not good? (3) Is it both good and not good? (4) Is it neither good nor not good? These questions were generalized into the forms: (1) Is S, P? (2) Is S, not-P? (3) Is S, both P and not-P? (4) Is S, neither P nor not-P?

Those philosophers who gave a negative answer to all four questions were called "eel-wrigglers" by the Buddhists. It was impossible to fix their position either for approval or for rejection. They would criticize any view, positive or negative, but would not themselves hold any. And it was difficult for a serious person to enter into any controversy with them.

<sup>1</sup> This paper was given as an address to the Department of Philosophy, Harvard University, April 17, 1953, and was also read at the meeting of the Western Division of the American Philosophical Association, St. Louis, May 1, 1953.

Gautama, the founder of the school of Nyaya which laid the greatest emphasis on logic and contributed most to its development, called such philosophers *vitandavādins*, or critics without a position of their own. His followers generally refused to enter into any debate with them, and regarded *vitandā* (or criticism without any position) as one of the fallacies of thought. *Vitandā* is destructive criticism without any constructive effort; it disproves every doctrine, but proves none. And this method was resorted to by many who wanted to obtain an easy victory over their opponents in controversy; but when asked to enunciate their own position, they would say they had none.

It was right that the followers of Nyaya refused to enter into discussion with those who had no positive doctrine of their own to set forth, but wanted only to obtain victory over their rivals. As mere destructive criticism, *vitandā*, though not formally a fallacy, may be philosophically useless. But the critic may be a sincere sceptic or agnostic. And Sanjaya was not always regarded as a light-hearted critic. Sometimes he would not even deny a proposition, and would refuse to answer "Yes" or "No" to the question. It interested the author of the present paper to hear Professor McClure say<sup>2</sup> that Pyrrho, the famous Greek sceptic, accompanied Alexander the Great when the latter invaded India, and discussed philosophy with many Indian philosophers of the time. Alexander belonged to the fourth century B. C. Since the principle of four-cornered negation is older than the sixth century B. C., and since it was the principle of the Indian sceptics and agnostics, it is not unreasonable to think that Pyrrho was influenced in his extreme scepticism by the sceptics of India. For Pyrrho maintained that "I am not only not certain of the knowledge of any object, but also not certain that I am not certain of such knowledge." Sanjaya's position was strikingly similar. For he would not only not say a definite "Yes" to any question, but also not give a definite "No."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> In his lecture on Epicureanism at the Philosophy Colloquium, University of Illinois, Urbana, December 15, 1952.

<sup>3</sup> It is interesting to note that the position of the modern logical empiricists and even of Wittgenstein results in this position, when the question of the relation of definition and existence is raised.

Though the Buddhists nicknamed the followers of Sanjaya "eel-wrigglers," Buddha himself refused to answer questions about what he called the imponderables, such as "Is there an eternal entity like the Self (Atman)?" Indeed, his followers took his silence for denial, and developed their philosophies with that denial as the basis. But his silence was really his refusal to say "Yes" or "No." The reason for Buddha's silence lay in the indefiniteness of the concept of the Self or Atman. When we are not sure as to what exactly the Self or Atman means, it would be useless to answer the question whether the entity meant by the word exists or does not exist. But Sanjaya would plead the same reason for answering the question about the existence of everything. Buddha, for instance, enunciated the four Aryan (Noble) Truths: (1) The world is full of suffering; (2) suffering has a cause; (3) it can be stopped; and (4) there is a way to stop suffering. Sanjaya would attack each of the four truths and say that each can be neither proved nor disproved. In fact, the greatest of the dialecticians of Buddhist philosophy, Nagarjuna, the author of *Mādhyamikakārikās* (first century B. C. or A. D.), did actually show that that was so. The four Aryan Truths involve a belief in the doctrine of causation. But like Bradley, in his *Appearance and Reality*, Nagarjuna showed that causation is self-contradictory and so cannot be real. Thus Sanjaya, though dead long before, won a victory over the Buddhists.

The Charvakas or the Indian Materialists were not at first sceptics, but scepticism entered their philosophy as well later on. At first they accepted only perception as the source of certain knowledge. Inference, they said, is invalid, because the major premise of the syllogism cannot be established and assumes the truth of the conclusion. Since God and the Atman (Self) are not objects of perception, and since inference is not a valid source of knowledge, they contended, the reality of neither can be established. The later Charvakas went farther. They maintained that even perception could not be a valid source of knowledge, for practically the same reasons as those which Russell, for instance, among contemporary philosophers, would advance. Thus the later Charvakas tended to end in complete scepticism, which was at first attributed to Sanjaya.

It is difficult to say whether Sanjaya was only an eel-wiggler who offered answers that were either evasive or cut both ways, or a sincere sceptic, or a sincere agnostic, because we do not have enough evidence. But he is reported sometimes to have said "No" to both positive and negative questions like "Is S, P?" and "Is S, not-P?" and at other times to have kept silent. This denial later came to be expressed in the following forms:

1. I do not take it thus;
2. I do not take it the other way;
3. I advance no different opinion;
4. I do not deny your position; and
5. I do not say that it is neither the one nor the other.

The fourth and fifth forms say in effect that neither of the two rival theories is denied. The third says that no third alternative is given. Everything is denied, and even the denial is denied. Then what is the result? Silence. Pyrrho was not even certain that he was not certain of the truth of any cognition! We find very close similarity between the two sceptics, if we call Sanjaya a sceptic.

Up to this point philosophers found that it was possible to doubt the truth of every statement, and even said that they could doubt whether they doubted. Do the "doubting and denial" and "the doubting and denial of doubting and denial" imply that there is no reality with a fixed nature? A thoroughgoing sceptic would say that we can doubt whether there is any reality at all, and deny the affirmative proposition, "there is reality." Of course, he would not say, "there is no reality"; that is, he would not assert a negative proposition, because even that could be denied. Denying a proposition would not be, for him, the assertion of its opposite or its negative. But one may say also, "there is reality, but every form of our cognition of that reality can be denied." One would then tend to be an agnostic; one's position would be "there is reality, but our cognition about it cannot be certain." Buddha's refusal to answer the question, "does the Atman (Self) exist?" is interpreted by some modern scholars in this way. Yet there is another possible alternative to this position: "there is reality; its nature is such and such; still, it is possible to understand it in quite opposite ways." This was the position taken by Jainism.

## II

Mahavira, the founder of Jaina religion and philosophy, was a senior contemporary of Buddha. He and his followers had to enter into philosophical controversies with the followers of Sanjaya, as did Buddha and his followers. Though Jainism propounded definite doctrines of its own, it preached tolerance of opposite views and their appreciation. It therefore accepted the principle that there can be a reason for denying or affirming any proposition. It maintained that, though its own philosophy was the true one, there can be a point of view from which its truth can be denied. Then it made a logical generalization and said that there is a point of view from which any proposition can be denied or affirmed; thus it formulated its theory of the relativity of truth. This meant for Jainism that all propositions, except the propositions of its own system, have relative truth. Thereafter it developed its doctrine of standpoints (*nayavāda*) and the doctrine of conditioned predication (*syādvāda*). That is, every statement is true from one standpoint and false from another; every statement, therefore, is a conditioned truth. Thus both "S is P" and "S is not-P" can be true, though from different standpoints.

*Naya* originally meant for the Jainas a way, an approach, a mode, a trope, an aspect or meaning of things. When we consider one aspect of a thing, one statement about it will be true and the other false; but when we consider another aspect, the first statement may be false and the other true. So no statement can be absolutely true; it has only relative truth. For instance, if we say, "Cause is prior to effect," it is true in the sense that cause is the logical antecedent of effect. But the statement can be assailed dialectically, as it has been by many a dialectician in both India and the West. We may argue: every cause is a cause with reference to a particular effect; but how can it refer to the effect, if the effect is not prior? Then the statement, "cause is prior to effect," is denied; but the reason for the denial is not arbitrary. So both the affirmation and the denial of "cause is prior to the effect" are true; but they are true from different points of view.

The Jaina logicians attempted to classify the *nayas* or standpoints; but we get different classifications, which we need not

discuss for the present. However, they formulated, as a result, their doctrine of seven-fold conditional predication:

1. It is possible "S is P";
2. It is possible "S is not-P";
3. It is possible "S is both P and not-P";
4. It is possible "S is indescribable";
5. It is possible "S is both P and indescribable";
6. It is possible "S is both not-P and indescribable"; and
7. It is possible "S is both P and not-P and also indescribable."

Now, indescribability means that S is neither P nor not-P. P and not-P are opposites and therefore cannot be applied simultaneously to the same subject. Then all that we can say about S is that no predicate can be referred to it. That is, there is no *what* or its negative which we can refer to the *that*. It is the same as saying that S is neither P nor not-P. The seventh form means that S is both P and not-P and also neither P nor not-P. The Sanskrit word for "it is possible" is *syād*.<sup>4</sup> The possibility asserted here is

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<sup>4</sup> The word *syād* has given rise to misinterpretation and confusion. In Sanskrit, the word generally means "may be" or "possible"; but it is also an indeclinable without any reference to the future, and may be translated as "let it be" or "it can be." The Jainas say that even Sankara misunderstood the word. The word as used by the Jainas does not mean the possibility of the objective event but the possible justifiability of any or all of the seven assertions about it. I feel that the use of the words "may be" and "possible" may better be discontinued in this connexion, though many translators and interpreters have been using them. If an event A is five hundred miles away from an event B from the standpoint C, but only four hundred miles away from the standpoint D, what word should we use to express this situation of relativity? Is it proper to say that A is possibly five hundred miles away from B? It is five hundred miles away from B, but from the standpoint C; and at the same time it is four hundred miles away from the same B, but from the standpoint D. Thus the possibility meant by *syād* can only be the possible justifiability of a truth or theory but not the possibility of an object or an event. The Jainas do not mean that "S is possibly P" but that "it is possible to justify that S is P." It seems that their idea can be better expressed as "S can be P," not again in the sense that "S can become P," but in the sense that "there is a justification for S being P." If we draw a distinction between conditioned and conditional predication as between "S is P because of C" and "S is P, if C," then the predication accepted by the Jainas in this connexion would be conditioned predication but not conditional predication. The Jainas say that their rivals accept only one (*ekānta*) of the seven alternatives and turn the alternatives into disjunctives; but they themselves accept all (*anekānta*)

not bare possibility, which is the same as absence of impossibility; nor is it the psychological possibility of an assertion. It can be a conditioned or significant possibility. *Naya* supplies the condition. The proposition then would be a possible truth in the sense of a relative truth or an alternative truth. From the standpoint of absolute truth, which is actual and complete, it is a possible truth, because it is partial and relative, and does not fall under the usual forms of modal possibility.

The Jaina doctrine may further be explained by taking the example of an orange and the statement, "that is an orange." The object may here be viewed from the standpoint of substance or from that of qualities.<sup>8</sup> If, like Berkeley, we ask whether there is any substance besides the qualities and challenge the opponent to show it, he may say that there is no orange but only a bundle of qualities. Then,

1. "That is an orange" will be true, from the standpoint of substance, if we accept substance as real.
2. "That is not an orange" will be true from the standpoint of qualities, if we accept the view that substance is nothing but a bundle of qualities.
3. "That is both an orange and also not an orange" will be true if we take the points of view of substance and qualities successively.

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and treat the alternatives only as alternatives and not as disjunctives. We may as well omit the use of the word "possible"; for in "S is P because of C," not only "S is P" but also "C" are categorically asserted, and there is no assumption or supposition of a hypothetical condition.

This distinction gives rise to a problem in logic, which I wish to suggest but cannot discuss now. The disjunctive judgment, in which the alternatives are mutually exclusive, asserts the possibility of one of the alternatives being true, because so far as our knowledge goes, we are not yet sure as to which of the alternatives is actual. But does the alternative judgment also assert only possibility? "Or," in the sense of strict exclusion, means that we are not sure about the actual alternative. But when "or" can mean "and," are we not making a categorical statement? A categorical statement is a statement of actuality. It has therefore to be decided how far the alternative judgment is a categorical judgment. The Jainas say that all the seven alternatives are true, and so their seven-fold conditioned predication is an all-comprehensive categorical statement. It looks as though, from the standpoint of logic as such, we have to recognize degrees between absolute exclusion of alternatives and the complete affirmation of all the alternatives.

<sup>8</sup> Substance and Quality are actually two of the tropes accepted by the Jainas.

4. We may take a combined standpoint and may try to predicate "orange" and "not-orange" simultaneously. But no entity can have opposite predicates. Yet the entity is there in front of us. Then "that is indescribable" will be true.
5. "That is an orange and indescribable" will be true, if we combine the standpoint of substance and the combined standpoint of substance and qualities.
6. "That is not an orange and indescribable" will be true if we combine the standpoint of qualities and the combined standpoint of substance and qualities.
7. "That is both an orange and not an orange and also indescribable" will be true if we combine the standpoints of 3 and 4.

The doctrines of standpoints and the relativity of truth is the greatest contribution Jainism has made to the growth of Indian logic. While Sanjaya and his followers either kept silent or denied both the poles of opposition, the Jaina logicians saw a relative truth in each pole and thus adopted a more positive and determinate attitude toward our cognitions of the world. While the former felt that every statement could be denied, they got puzzled and began denying every statement including their denial. But the Jaina logicians faced the problem with courage, and tried to lift themselves out of scepticism and agnosticism by formulating the twin doctrines of standpoints and the relativity of truth.

### III

It has already been said that, though the Buddhists ridiculed Sanjaya and his followers by calling them eel-wrigglers, one of the greatest of the Buddhist philosophers, Nagarjuna, adopted the same principle in order to prove his doctrine of the Sunya (Void). Now, in mathematics "Sunya" means "zero," and in metaphysics it means "that which is neither positive nor negative." In the arithmetical series of numbers, the zero comes midway between the positive and negative numbers thus:

987654321   0   123456789

Is the zero positive or negative in the above series? To say that a number is minus zero or plus zero makes no difference. The zero is therefore an indeterminate quantity in terms of plus and minus; and though an indeterminate quantity, it is still a number. We do not say that it is not a number but that it is an in-

determinate number. Now, if it is not positive or negative, can we say that it is both positive and negative? No, the positive and negative are opposites and cannot be attributed to the same number. Then, can we say that it is neither positive nor negative nor other than what is positive or negative? No, we cannot think of anything definite that is neither. To be something other than positive or negative, any entity must have a determinate nature; but we cannot think of any, and the zero is indeterminate. Thus the zero becomes a quantity of which all the four alternatives are denied: it is neither positive, nor negative, nor both positive and negative, nor neither positive nor negative.

We can best understand Nagarjuna's metaphysical conception of the Sunya if we apply the above mathematical conception of the zero. Unfortunately the word has a secondary meaning: nothing, nothingness, void, emptiness, etc. And in spite of repeated protest by Nagarjuna and his followers, even his own contemporaries took the word in its secondary meaning and accused Nagarjuna of being a nihilist, a negativist, and so forth. And if modern translators and interpreters commit the same mistake, they may certainly be excused. Hegel, for instance, thought that Nothing, which is the contradictory of the category of Being in his dialectic, was the basic concept of the Buddhists, by whom he meant the followers of Nagarjuna, who all along have been protesting that their Sunya was neither Being nor Non-Being and calling themselves *mādhyamikas* or middle-pathers. Buddha preached the doctrine of the mean or the middle path in ethics. So Nagarjuna wanted to do the same in metaphysics by asserting the mean between the positive and the negative, or Being and Non-Being. Reality is neither Being nor Non-Being nor both nor neither. It is the negation of the negation of Being and Non-Being.

One would perhaps ask how, if Reality is neither Being nor Non-Being, the alternative "neither Being nor Non-Being" can also be negated. Nagarjuna's answer is that Reality, though not the same as Being or Non-Being, cannot be different from them. So even the fourth "neither Being nor Non-Being" has to be negated without affirming either Being or Non-Being. The whole expres-

sion ends as only a negation or the assertion of a negation without implying the assertion of an affirmation as the basis.

One might again ask: is not Nagarjuna violating the principle of contradiction? Is he not saying that there is a middle between the two contradictories, when he is denying both? His answer is that he is not asserting that there is a middle between the two contradictories; for he is denying even that middle by saying that it is not neither Being nor Non-Being. To say, further, that anything is, is to say that it has Being; but Being is denied.

If Reality is the negation of these four alternatives, what about Cause, Effect, Substance, Quality, Activity, Relation, etc.? Since ultimate Reality is Sunya or the four-fold negation, the essential nature of everything is Sunya or four-fold negation. Nagarjuna applied this principle to every concept and thus turned it into a metaphysical principle. Thus what was in the hands of Sanjaya a principle of doubt, scepticism, or agnosticism became a metaphysical principle in the hands of Nagarjuna. What was a principle of method for the former became a principle expressive of ultimate reality for the latter. Like Bradley, Nagarjuna would dialectically analyze every concept and show that it is neither existent, nor non-existent, nor both, nor neither. It is only Sunya.

Sankara, the founder of the non-dualistic school of the Vedanta, and his followers made a different use of this principle of four-fold negation. Neither Sankara nor Nagarjuna would call himself a sceptic or an agnostic, because both of them say that they are certain of ultimate truth and give an expression for its nature. But while Nagarjuna says that this four-fold negation expresses the nature of every existent thing and therefore the nature of ultimate Reality, Sankara would contend that this four-fold negation is still a negation and therefore cannot be ultimate, for every negation must have a positive basis without which it will be insignificant. My judgment, "the pen is not red," is based on my judgment, "the pen is black." Had I not seen the blackness or some other positive quality of the pen, I could not have said, "it is not red." Then, if the four-fold negation is true of everything in the world, what does it indicate? It indicates the phenomenality of every entity. Substance, Quality, Cause, Effect, Activity, Relation, etc., are phenomena, and in terms of Being and

Non-Being, the four-fold negation is expressive of their nature. But since every negative involves a positive as its basis, the phenomenal involves the noumenal, which is Being or the Brahman.

What about the metaphysics of the zero or the Sunya, which is neither positive nor negative? I have made use of the mathematical zero, as interpreted above, to explain Nagarjuna's position,<sup>6</sup> because in Sanskrit both the mathematical and metaphysical zero are called by the same word *Sunya*. It is interesting to note that another word used by the Sanskrit writers for the mathematical zero is *Purna*, which means the full and not the empty. Thus the Full and the Empty came to denote the same number. A Sankarite would say that the Zero, though without determinations, is still not without value, but it gets its value from Being, which lies at its basis. He did not tackle the mathematical problem, but approached the metaphysical from the side of epistemology. He said that Being and Non-Being, or the positive and the negative, do not belong to the same level. The negative presupposes the positive, but not *vice versa*. One would perhaps say that the judgment, "the pen is black," *implies* the judgment, "the pen is not red, etc." But one cannot say that the first judgment *presupposes* the second. For if some one makes the judgment, "the pen in my box is not green," we have a logical right to assume that he knows the definite colour of the object. But if he says, "the pen in my box is black," we cannot say what negative judgment he has in mind or even whether he has any negative judgment in mind at all. A negative judgment therefore presupposes an affirmative, but not *vice versa*.

Hence a purely negative proposition cannot express the nature of ultimate Reality. Reality is Being. But the world we experience cannot be Non-Being; had it been Non-Being, we would not have experienced it as an objective world that faces us and does not depend on our sweet will for its existence. The Non-Being we know is the merely imaginary, like the horns of a hare or the son of a barren woman. Thus the world is not Non-

<sup>6</sup> There may be other interpretations of zero, but this interpretation is taken, as it suits Nagarjuna's metaphysics.

Being either. Because Being and Non-Being are opposites, the world cannot be both. Then, if it is neither Being nor Non-Being, can it be a third entity, which is neither? No, it cannot be even a third entity, for there can be no third entity besides Being and Non-Being; that is, if anything is, it must be Being.

Though Sankara himself did not enter into minute dialectical clarifications, his followers propounded a fifth denial to characterize the Brahman or Being: the Brahman is not "neither Being nor Non-Being nor both nor neither." The phenomenal world is

neither Being nor Non-Being nor (both Being and Non-Being) nor (neither Being nor Non-Being).

Then the noumenon is

not [neither Being nor Non-Being nor (both Being and Non-Being) nor (neither Being nor Non-Being)].

By implication the proposition then becomes

the noumenon is either Being or Non-Being or (both Being and Non-Being) or (neither Being nor Non-Being).

It cannot be Non-Being, because it is said to be positive; it cannot be both Being and Non-Being, because they are opposites; and it cannot be neither, because it must be positive. Thus the last three alternatives are negated and the first is retained.

#### IV

It is interesting to note another aspect of this negation. The noumenon is, according to Sankara and his followers, beyond the Logos and so beyond speech and thought. That is, Being cannot therefore be directly expressed, but only as the negation of negation. Every categorical expression must be one of the four terms:

1. S is P;
2. S is not-P;
3. S is both P and not-P; and
4. S is neither P nor not-P (different from both P and not-P).

Sankara and his followers, like Nagarjuna and his followers, say that none of the four forms is applicable to the phenomenal world

or any of its objects absolutely, because the phenomenal world is a world of relativity. Therefore they deny of the phenomenal world all the four propositions. Now, Nagarjuna says that relativity itself is the Absolute; but Sankara contends that relativity presupposes the Absolute and is therefore different from the Absolute. So his followers formulated the fifth denial, which is the denial of the four-fold denial. Now, the Absolute also, though Being, is beyond thought and speech. To say that something is speakable and thinkable is to say that some determination or determinant can be assigned to it. But every determinant belongs to the realm of relativity and so cannot be absolutely true. Hence, instead of saying "the Absolute is Being," it is said "the Absolute is not the relative," the relative being the four-fold negative.

## V

Now, we may summarize the different applications of the four-fold negation and their implications.

### (I) SCEPTICISM:

"The world is neither B nor not-B nor (both B and not-B) nor (neither B nor not-B)."

"B" stands for "Being."

#### *Implications:*

1. Negation is not an assertion.
2. Negation does not presuppose an affirmative basis, in the way that "the pen is not red" presupposes "the pen is black."
3. The negation of negation or the denial of denial is not affirmation.

(II) It is difficult to say whether Sanjaya was at any time an agnostic or whether any of his followers was an agnostic. But we may formulate the position without reference to any particular philosopher.

### AGNOSTICISM:

"The world is, but it is neither P nor not-P nor (both P and not-P) nor (neither P nor not-P)."

"P" stands for any determinant or determinate predicate, through which we can know any object. Here I have changed the notation

from "B" to "P," because the agnostics do not deny that the world is, but only that it is knowable. We can know anything only through determinate predicates, if we can know it at all; but none of the determinate predicates is applicable to the world. And so the world is unknowable.

*Implications:* All the three implications of scepticism.

We should, however, say that agnosticism has not been logically worked out by any Indian philosopher. The above second implication may or may not be accepted by the agnostic. If he does not accept it, we can ask how he knows that the world is, if not as the affirmative basis of the negative judgments. If he accepts it, we can ask how he can be an agnostic when he knows something as the affirmative basis of the negations. Agnosticism would thus contain an ultimate inconsistency. Sankara would escape agnosticism by saying that we know the affirmative basis, but not through determinations. It is not rational discursive knowledge, but suprarational.

(III) The Jainas did not accept scepticism. But for the same reasons as those for which the sceptics formulated their principle of four-fold negation, they formulated their seven-fold positive principle of the relativity of knowledge. Their doctrine is a doctrine of the relativity of knowledge but not relativism of reality. They hold that their own system is absolutely true and reality is absolutely what their system represents it to be. Now, the rival schools ask how the Jainas know that reality is actually what their system represents it to be. If knowledge is relative, then their knowledge of reality also can have only relative truth. However, we may formulate their principle of the relativity of knowledge as follows:

S is either B or not-B or (both B and not-B) or (neither B nor not-B) or [both B and (neither B nor not-B)] or [both not-B and (neither B nor not-B)] or [both (both B and not-B) and (neither B nor not-B)].

The word "or" means only alternation but not disjunction, because each alternative may be true and all the alternatives may be true at one and the same time.

This principle of seven-fold relativity is said to offer a good justification for the tolerance of rival views. But if it is possible to build up seven standpoints out of two opposite ones, how many

opposites can there be in the world and how many standpoints can be built out of them? The Jainas say that the number of predicates that can be positively or negatively referred to any subject is infinite; but with regard to any predicate, the conditioned statements can be only seven. But here one would pose an objection. If we take B and not-B successively and refer them to S, we get two successive judgments but not a joint reference, as in "S is both B and not-B." If, on the other hand, we make a joint reference, then B and not-B must have been taken simultaneously; and if they are taken simultaneously, the standpoint from which they are taken must be one and the same but not two; but then, if they are not two and opposed to each other, we can not get B and not-B. Thus, though the attempt at a positive formulation of the relativity of knowledge is praiseworthy, this method seems to lead us into some difficulties.

One would perhaps say that we can get a unitary standpoint for these positive formulations in the Absolute, which, as Bosanquet says in his *Meeting of Extremes in Contemporary Philosophy*, includes existence, non-existence, subsistence, thinkable, unthinkable, etc. First, we may point out that the Jainas are not absolutists and never made an attempt to build up a system of absolutism. At this point, the Buddhists are unlike the Jainas. The Buddhists also started with relativity, but they built it up into an absolutism, by turning relativity itself into an Absolute. Instead of saying, "S is either P or not-P or both or neither, etc.," they said, "S is neither P nor not-P nor both nor neither." Why? Because we cannot take so many standpoints together as one. We can take only the standpoint of S and we are concerned with S. The essential nature of every S is none of the four possible alternatives; and so the essential nature of everything or Reality is to be expressed as none of the four alternatives. It is common to every object, the same everywhere, so without a second, and so the Absolute.

Now Bradley, after dismissing every concept as an appearance and unreal in the first part of his *Appearance and Reality*, attempted to bring them together into the Absolute, which is to be the only individual. But could he combine the different standpoints from which each concept was torn into bits and declared an appearance? This would be the criticism that the Buddhists would

advance. So if relativity is positively formulated by accepting a plurality of standpoints as the Jainas did, we can integrate the relative bits into a unitary whole only when we succeed in integrating the standpoints, which we find difficult to accomplish.

*Implications:*

1. Negation is an assertion.
2. Negation does not presuppose an affirmative basis; but negation and affirmation can be counterparts asserted not from a single standpoint but from two opposite standpoints.
3. Double negation is affirmation. When both B and not-B are ascribable to S, they say that S is unpredicable. They do not question the affirmation of S, but Nagarjuna and Sankara would question it. For these two, "neither B nor not-B" means something other than B or not-B. This difference is due to the positive and negative formulations of relativity.

(IV) Some space has been given to the Jaina doctrine, because it is the formulation of the principle of relativity, which arose out of scepticism, but was made positive. But Nagarjuna's formulation of relativism as the principle of four-fold negation falls in the line of the argument of this paper.

**METAPHYSICAL RELATIVISM:**

"Reality is the essence of the world and it is neither B nor not-B nor (both B and not-B) nor (neither B nor not-B)."

"B" here again stands for "Being." Being also is a determination, determinant, a determinate concept like any other predicate, according to Nagarjuna. Being and Non-Being imply each other and are on the same level. "The pen is red" implies and presupposes "the pen is not red" and *vice versa*, and so the positive and the negative are counterparts or counter-positives of each other. Yet the negative judgment, "the pen is not red," does not imply the affirmative judgment, "the pen is black," as the affirmative basis.

*Implications:*

1. Negation is an assertion, because there is ultimate reality or truth.
2. Negation and affirmation imply each other on the same level and

are counterparts of each other and so both can be negated. But negation does not have an affirmative basis.<sup>7</sup>

3. Two negatives do not always make an affirmative; otherwise, the four-fold negation would involve self-contradiction.

(V) METAPHYSICAL ABSOLUTISM AND PHENOMENAL RELATIVISM:

"Reality is not the phenomenal world; and the phenomenal world is neither B nor not-B nor (both B and not-B) nor (neither B nor not-B)."

Therefore, "Reality is not [neither B nor not-B nor (both B and not-B) nor (neither B or not-B)]."

This is Sankara's position.

*Implications:*

1. Negation is an assertion.
2. Negation presupposes and is based on an affirmation. The judgment, "The pen is not red" presupposes as its basis the judgment, "The pen is black," but not its counter judgment, "The pen is red."
3. Two negatives do not necessarily make an affirmative.

VI

In the four-cornered negation, the negation of both B and not-B may appear to be a little puzzling. But it can be explained with the help of the difference between contrary and contradictory opposition of western logic. Two contraries can both be negated, but not the contradictories. Sankara takes Being and Non-Being as contraries: Reality is Being; Non-Being belongs to the imaginary world of objects like the horns of a hare, the son of a barren woman, etc., and the phenomenal world is not Non-Being; so in between Being and Non-Being comes the phenomenal world. And yet Being and Non-Being are the only two concepts in terms of Being; and so the phenomenal world is not even neither. To be so relatively related to Being and Non-Being is the nature of the phenomenal. Thus Sankara would argue.

However, it should be said that the classical Sanskrit logicians did not have separate words for the contrary and the contradictory. They carried on their controversies over the prin-

<sup>7</sup> It is interesting to note that some of the other Buddhist logicians do not accept this implication. See Steberbatsky: *Buddhist Logic*.

ciple of double negation, however. We may say that if the principle of double negation is applicable to an opposition, it is contradictory; otherwise, contrary. In the case of propositions with quantified subjects, it is easy for us to determine which is a contrary and which a contradictory negation. But in the others it is extremely difficult, as in the following example:

When X says to Y, "there is no pen on the table," what is it that X is denying? To put the question in the terminology of the Sanskrit logicians, what is the counter-part of the negation of the pen for both X and Y? X is negating every pen on the table. So every pen is the counter-part of the negation of the pen; that is, the class of pens is negated on the table. What then should be the negation of this negation? We negate this negation even when there is one pen on the table. But what was at first negated or the counter-part of the first negation was the whole class of pens, not merely this particular pen. So some logicians concluded that the negation of negation is not the affirmation of the original counterpart and that two negatives do not necessarily make an affirmative.

It might be said that what is first negated is not the class of pens as a whole but "any pen" and that we should not confuse the class concept with the concept of "any member of the class." This objection was advanced by those Indian logicians who accepted the principle of double negation. In answer it is said that this distinction does not solve the problem. When X makes the first negation, he negates "any member." Y also understands by it the negation of "any member." Now, suppose Y is not looking at the table. X places some pen on the table and negates the negation. X now knows that the pen on the table is, for instance, a particular black pen. But because any member indifferently is negated originally, does not Y have the right to affirm, through the second negation, any member he can think of but not coinciding with the pen which X has before him? What was negated is "any member of the class" but not "some one member of the class." If some particular member had been negated, the judgment would not have been "there is no pen on the table," but "some particular pen is not on the table." So while the first negation negates "any member of the class," the second negation

affirms "some particular member of the class." The first negation is a universal negation, but the negation of negation is a particular affirmation. What is negated by the first is a universal or class,\* but what is affirmed by the second is a particular. Further, if two negatives make one affirmative, they must make the same affirmative to both the speaker and the listener. But they may not. Hence, double negation is not necessarily the original affirmation; it may be so in some instances, but not in all.

This difficulty may perhaps be overcome if logic is formalized, if negation is treated as an expression of falsity, and if falsity of falsity is treated as the truth denied by the first negation. We shall then have:

1. "There is a pen on the table." Call it the proposition *p*.
2. "The proposition *p* is false." This is the negation of 1.
3. "(The proposition *p* is false) is false." This is the negation of 2, and so the negation of the negation of 1.

But 1, 2, and 3 are propositions and not epistemic acts in actual knowing. The ancient and classical Indian logicians thought of negation as an epistemic act. The scheme does not suit the actual process of knowing. For instance, the second proposition implies that there is the first proposition, which it has to falsify. But we may not have a corresponding judgment. When I say, "the pen is not red," we should not assume that I first asserted, "the pen is red," and then said, "the pen is not red," or "(the pen is red) is false." On the other hand, I must have asserted to myself, "the pen is black," and then, as red suggests itself, said, "the pen is not red." †

However, the followers of Sankara, like Nagarjuna, did not accept the principle of double negation. One would perhaps ask, how then can the negation of the four-fold negation result in Being for the followers of Sankara? They got it because of their principle that negation must have an affirmative basis. The

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\* For the present we may leave out the question of the reality of the universal and consider the universal to be the same as the class or class concept, since the meaning of the objection is clear even without that consideration.

† This difficulty suggests that negation as formalized cannot be as useful for application to reality as some formal logicians might think.

affirmative basis of a negation is not the same as that negation but what is other than that negation. The basis or locus of the negation of the pen as well as of the negation of the negation of the pen is the table. The four-fold negation exhausts all the alternatives and expresses the relativity of the phenomenal world. Reality, or the Brahman, as the basis of the phenomenal world, is the basis of the four-fold negation and so is its other. Since it is the positive basis, we do not need for it another positive basis.

Now, are the followers of Sankara contradicting themselves when they deny the principle of double negation and yet say that the negation of the four-fold negation gives the affirmative Brahman, or that the negation of the negation here results in affirmation? They would meet this objection by making an important distinction: the positive counter-part of negation is not the same as the positive basis of negation. The positive counter-part of "there is no pen" is pen; but the positive basis of this negation is not the pen but the table which we see and on which there is no pen. Reality or the Brahman comes in only as the positive basis and not merely as the counter-part of the four-fold negation. Some of the followers of Sankara, in fact, say that this negation is of a different kind from the first four.

*University of Rajputana.*

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The International Congress of Mathematicians will be held in Amsterdam for one week beginning on September 2nd, 1954. Papers will be presented on Logic, Philosophy of Mathematics, History of Mathematics, and the role of Mathematics in Education. The Organizing Committee can be reached in Amsterdam at 2nd Boerhaavestraat 49.

An International Congress of Philosophy will be held in São Paulo, Brazil between the 9th and 16th of August, 1954. The Congress will divide into five sections: Philosophy of Religion and Ethics, Philosophy of Art and Aesthetics, Juridical and Social Philosophy, Philosophy of Science, and Philosophy in the Americas. A special session will be held in Commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of Schelling's death. The Secretary of the Congress may be addressed at Rua 24 de Maio, 104, 8º andar, São Paulo, Brazil.

The University of Pennsylvania has received a grant in aid from the Rockefeller Foundation for the reproduction of the unpublished manuscripts of Leibniz. The film will be deposited in the University Library. It will be available for the use of interested scholars.

The 28th Annual Meeting of the American Catholic Philosophical Association was held April 20th and 21st in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The Presidential Address was delivered by James Collins and was entitled "God as a Function in Modern Systems of Philosophy."

The Renaissance Society of America was founded at Columbia University in January 1954. The Society is a scholarly and professional organization for those interested in studies of the Renaissance. John Herman Randell is President. Frederick W.

Sternfeld edits the society's *Renaissance News*. The address of the membership chairman, Albert H. Buford, is 390 First Avenue, New York 10, New York.

### **ERRATA**

In Erna Schneider's "Recent Discussion of Subjunctive Conditionals," this journal, VI (1953), "J. D. O'Connor" should be throughout replaced by "D. J. O'Connor." In the indented Ia. on p. 643, "properly" should replace "poorly," and "implications" should replace "interpretations."

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